THE HISTORY OF JACK WILKS, A LOVER OF LIBERTY.

——— Determin'd, hold
Your Independence; for, that once deſtroy'd,
Unbounded Freedom is a morning dream,
That flits aerial from the cheated eye.
THOMSON's Liberty, Part III.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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THE

HISTORY

OF

JACK WILKS,

A

LOVER OF LIBERTY.

BRITISH MUSEUM

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

THE

HISTORY

OF

JACK WILKS.

"WAtch!—Watch!—Watch!" The repetition of thoſe alarming monoſyllables, about midnight, were heard by Jack Wilks. Jack was paſſing haſtily along the Strand, and ſoon came up to an old gentleman, endeavouring to defend a very fine girl (as ſhe appeared to

10

be) from two or three young bloods, who ſeemed very deſirous to get her out of *his* poſſeſſion.

Mr. Wilks, having been from his earlieſt days a warm lover of Liberty, immediately took the ſide of the ſuffering party, and, by driving his opponents in a ſhort time out of the field, reſtored the gentleman and lady to the freedom which they enjoyed before they were ſo rudely attacked.

He then offered to ſee them ſafe to the place to which they were going, leſt any new aſſault might be made upon them.

The old gentleman, whoſe name was Hyde, with many thanks, accepted of his protection, and he ſaw him ſafe to his own houſe with the lady.

Mr. Hyde very civilly deſired his new acquaintance to walk in and take ſome refreſhment, after the trou-

ble

ble which he had given himſelf on *his* and his daughter's account.

He walked in, well pleaſed with the freedom of Mr. Hyde's behaviour, but refuſed every kind of refreſhment propoſed, telling him, that he would, with his leave, call and ſee him again.

Mr. Hyde made a polite reply to this requeſt, and Miſs aſſented only by a modeſt bow as ſhe ſat. She was, indeed, pleaſed with her deliverer's intreaty, as he appeared to her to be one of the moſt agreeable men ſhe had ever ſeen: *that* appearance, added to the ſervice he had juſt done *her* and her father, rendered him an object doubly deſerving of her attention.

Jack, though not regularly handſome, had a very pleaſing expreſſion in his countenance: he was remarkably

well-made, had an eaſy, genteel addreſs, and was lively in his converſation: keeping, however, a proper decency in the company of thoſe to whom he imagined the licentiouſneſs of his ſentiments might be offenſive. Miſs Hyde, therefore, beheld him in the moſt agreeable light, and found his ſociety very deſirable.

As to *him*, when he firſt flew to the aſſiſtance of *her* and her father, he was impelled by the paſſion for Liberty, which had been his predominant one from the time that he was capable of articulating his feelings. This paſſion, properly regulated, has converted cowards into heroes; has reſcued nations, groaning under an arbitrary government, from the tyranny of their oppreſſive rulers; redeemed millions of unhappy wretches from the moſt ignominious and unmerited

merited ſervitude; and——checked the formidable power of a General Warrant. But when it is indulged without moderation, it becomes a dangerous impulſe, and is attended with the moſt pernicious conſequences.——It ſtirs up ſedition among the populace, intercepts the adminiſtration of public juſtice, and gives the infamous part of mankind but too favourable opportunities to fatten on the miſeries of their fellow-creatures.——It deſtroys all order, and confounds all diſtinctions in a ſtate, and has frequently raiſed the hand of a ſubject againſt his ſovereign.

To return to Mr. Wilks and Miſs Hyde.

When Mr. Wilks ſo reſolutely attacked the daring diſturbers of the public peace, he had ſcarce time to

caſt a ſingle glance on the lady, againſt whom all their inſolence was levelled; nor did he know whether ſhe, perſonally, was worthy of the exertion of his arm in her favour. But as ſoon as he had conquered his riotous adverſaries, and nobly put them to flight, he diſcovered, in a few minutes afterwards, that ſhe well deſerved the pains which he had taken to protect her.

Myra Hyde was at this time about nineteen, tall, and finely formed: her complexion was fair, animated with a lively colour, and ſhe had a pair of dark blue eyes, with a luſtre in them beyond deſcription, which ſometimes by their dazzling brilliancy, and ſometimes by their delicate languor, threw ſo many charms over her whole countenance, that the exact ſymmetry of her features,

tures,—which were *not* diſagreeable,—was almoſt overlooked. Her charms, however, were not confined merely to her *perſon*; her modeſty and her ſenſibility made her more captivating than many women, who were juſtly pronounced to be more regular *beauties*.

Wilks, who was as warm an admirer of a fine woman as any young fellow whatever of his age and conſtitution, could not be inſenſible of Miſs Hyde's attractions, which, indeed, grew more and more powerful, every viſit he made to her father, as ſhe, being no way diſpleaſed with his converſation, made no efforts to conceal her converſible talents: though neither ſhe, nor Jack, knew enough of each other's ſituation in life to imagine, that the wiſh on either ſide for a more in-

timate connection between them, could not be diſcreetly entertained.

Jack, who was as thoughtleſs as he was brave, never once gave himſelf any trouble about diſcretion. He was, indeed, too zealous a devotee to Liberty, to think of entering into honourable engagements with any woman; and as the lady had never furniſhed him with the ſlighteſt reaſon to ſuppoſe, that ſhe would liſten to him on any other terms, he kept his paſſion for her within bounds; yet it was ſometimes obſervable, by his aſſiduities to amuſe, and his attentions to pleaſe her.——She herſelf, ready, from her wiſhes for ſuch a diſcovery, ſoon found a remarkable tenderneſs in his eyes, and a particular ſoftneſs in his voice whenever he addreſſed her, even upon the moſt common ſubjects: ſo that ſhe could

could not but plainly perceive, that ſhe had made *ſome* impreſſion upon him: and the repetition of his viſits at laſt, gave her father room to believe, that they were not repeated, and frequently too, merely on *his* account; for he often went to the houſe when Mr. Hyde was abroad; when he knew he *would* be abroad:—his viſits, however, were never concealed from him by his daughter; and, indeed, as he often, on his return home, found Jack ſitting with her, he began to hope that ſhe had really made a conqueſt of him—to *hope*, I ſay, becauſe, as Mr. Wilks always appeared and behaved like a gentleman, and as upon the ſtricteſt enquiry about him ſince their firſt acquaintance, he had heard nothing to contradict that behaviour, and that appearance; he believed his

daughter might be very eligibly, if not very advantageouſly provided for, by being united to him, as he had it not in his power to bequeath much above a thouſand pounds to her at his death, ſaved out of an income ariſing from an employment in the law, which he had followed with reputation for ſeveral years. With this way of thinking, therefore, Mr. Hyde gave Mr. Wilks all decent opportunities to be in private with his amiable daughter; and whenever Jack took his leave, expected to hear her inform him of the propoſals which he had offered to her.

He waited till he was weary; for Jack was by no means the ſort of man he wiſhed to find him with regard to his Myra: at laſt he aſked her, if he had not talked to the purpoſe.

With

With a modeſt glow, which ſufficiently ſhewed how much ſhe felt herſelf diſappointed, ſhe returned a negative to his queſtion.

"Well then," ſaid he, "ſince "Mr. Wilks has no ſuch deſigns, "it will be proper to make him ſen- "ſible, that he ought to ſee us leſs "frequently, as his being continu- "ally with *you* may encourage o- "ther people to form conjectures ſi- "milar to mine, and prevent your "being *ſeriouſly* addreſſed by a man "of a different turn."

A ſecond, and a deeper bluſh, now dyed the face and neck of Myra. After a little heſitation, ſhe anſwered, "You, certainly, know a great "deal better than I do, Sir, how to "act on ſuch an occaſion; but we "ſhall, I think, behave indelicate- "ly, by inducing Mr. Wilks to

" ſuppoſe, that we could expect him " to have formed any deſign to be " *related* to us; and he will naturally " ſuppoſe ſo, if you put a ſtop to his " viſits." " You are right, girl," ſaid Mr. Hyde: " old heads " are wiſer than young ones, but " young ones are quicker at think- " ing: but I have a better ſcheme, " Myra. You have received ſeveral " invitations from Mrs. Liſter of " Hampſtead.—What if you went " and ſtaid with *her* a week or two. " By ſo doing, you will either drive " him to declare, or get rid of his " viſits entirely, and ſave your " bluſhes too, my dear."

Myra, whoſe mind was gentle as her features were compoſed, ſighed at this project of her father's; but, though ſhe could not approve of it, ſhe determined to make no objection

to its execution: as ſhe had hitherto believed, that her father knew beſt what ſteps were the propereſt for her to take.

She, accordingly, wrote to Mrs. Liſter, and left London agreeably to the ſcheme preconcerted by her father, without giving the ſlighteſt hint of her intention to Mr. Wilks, though ſhe left *home*, and removed from him, with reluctance, with regret.

Jack, coming to Mr. Hyde's as uſual, and hearing that Myra was gone, involuntarily ſighed; but wondering at the ſame time what the devil ailed him, ſhrugged up his ſhoulders.——He could not, however, totally baniſh all thoughts concerning Miſs Hyde.

Mr. Hyde waited impatiently to hear him come to the point, and to aſk his permiſſion to pay his reſpects

reſpects to his daughter at Hampſtead.

No ſuch permiſſion being requeſted, nor indeed dreamed of, the two gentlemen began to look cool at each other; and rather with eyes of indifference.

The elder, forgetting that he had ever received any aſſiſtance from the younger; and the younger not remembering the hoſpitable treatment he had met with, would almoſt have parted with his ears, to have taken every unallowable advantage with which, he ſtrongly fancied, Myra might have, in time, indulged him, had they not been ſo aukwardly ſeparated.

To confeſs the truth, Mr. Wilks had ſo inveterate an averſion to every thing which threatened the leaſt reſtraint to his Liberty, his darling paſſion,

paſſion, and ſo violent a propenſity to the fair ſex in general, that I am afraid he would not have been deterred by any conſcientious ſcruples, from trying to force Myra, whom he extremely admired, to accommodate herſelf to *his* plan. But as ſhe was, luckily, taken out of his way for the preſent, it may not be amiſs, during her abſence, to give ſome account of her lover, if a man can rationally be ſaid to *love*, who only ſeeks the gratification of his own intemperate appetite, though it may be attended with the utter ruin of the *beloved* object;—but that word has nothing to do in the Libertine's vocabulary.

John Wilks was the only ſon of a younger brother, of a good family in the weſt of England. His father, having no idea of œconomy, ſoon leſ-

ſened his own moderate fortune, by an eager purſuit after pleaſure, with a larger one which his wife brought him. Before they were quite reduced, however, they retired into the country, and with the few *hundreds* remaining, purchaſed a farm.—Mr. Wilks met with ſome ſucceſs while his wife lived, who was of a frugal diſpoſition, and ſpent every hour in ſtudying how to improve their domeſtic affairs; but at *her* death he grew careleſs, and inattentive to every thing. The ſervants were left to their own management, and his affairs were all in confuſion.

In the midſt of that confuſion he caught a fever, which riſing to a violent height, for want of proper care on its firſt appearance, in a very ſhort time carried him off.

Jack,

Jack, at his father's deceaſe, had been ſome years at Cambridge, (having paſſed through all the *forms* in a very good grammar ſchool near his father's farm with reputation) as he was deſigned for the church: but, becoming his own maſter juſt at that age when young people are, probably, the leaſt capable of being truſted with themſelves; and having an invincible diſlike to every ſort of confinement, he took poſſeſſion of what devolved to him, which was not a large ſum, diſpoſed of the farm to the higheſt bidder, and repaired to London.

In London he renewed his acquaintance with ſome of his old *chums*, who were in town to *ſport* a *figure*, though better enabled, by the fullneſs of their purſes, to pay for

for thoſe pleaſures which attracted them to the metropolis.

They joined their forces, and dreſſed, and drank, and played, and——did every thing like men of frolick together.

Mr. Wilks had as much fire as any of his aſſociates; but he wanted fuel to keep it alive as long as he wiſhed to do.——However, like a man of *true ſpirit*, he ſent his laſt ſolitary guinea to be changed, before he thought of any methods to raiſe ſupplies for his current expences, and to preſerve his Liberty from violation. The reflections which the ſtate of his finances forced into his mind, were not a little diſquieting: he was puzzled to know how to proceed, and extremely at a loſs how to ſtrike upon an expedient for

for the repletion of his pocket, without the loſs of his independence.

Coming one night from the play, through the piazza, leaning careleſsly on the ſhoulder of a Mr. Burton, one of his college friends, a fellow came up to them, and looking firſt at the former, and then at the latter, ſaid, to Wilks, "I believe I am "right, Sir. I come from a Lady."

"To *me*," cried Jack, "I'll lay "my life."

"No, no, to *me*," interrupted Burton, puſhing his friend aſide.

"Hold, hold, Tom——by your "leave; where a woman is concern-"ed, I muſt be the man.——So a-"dieu"——(haſtily ſtepping after the man, who made a ſign to him with his finger.)

Burton, following him, pulled him back by the arm, crying, "You

"ſhan't

" ſhan't go; I gueſs at this raſcal's " errand: and——"

" And what's that to the pur- " poſe?" ſaid Jack; " I can gueſs " as well as you: and for that rea- " ſon am ſo ready to follow him. " This I am ſure of, I have little or " nothing to loſe, and there may be " ſomething to be got. Let me, " therefore, purſue my deſtiny."

Having ſpoken theſe words, he darted away with ſo much celerity from Burton, that he was ſoon out of ſight; and the unſteady glimmering of the lamps, together with the increaſing crowd, would have rendered any attempt to recover him ridiculous.

As ſoon as the fellow had drawn Jack to ſome diſtance from the ſpot on which he had firſt ſpoken to him, he looked back, and not ſeeing any

body in the leaſt reſembling his friend, deſired him to ſtep into the firſt chair he met with.

The chairmen having, agreeably to the directions they had received, carried him acroſs a number of ſtreets, and through a variety of blind alleys, ſet him down at laſt at the end of a long dead wall.

The fellow then, opened a door with a key which he took out of his pocket. That door let them into a garden; ſhutting it immediately, and pulling out a dark lanthorn, he conducted Jack to a room on the oppoſite ſide, elegantly furniſhed and lighted up, and intreated him to reſt himſelf.

Mr. Wilks, though not naturally of a timorous temper, was not altogether free from apprehenſion, when he ſaw the fellow lock the garden

garden door, and take out his lanthorn; conſidering, however, that he had not much to loſe, and could not well be ſuſpected of having a great deal about him, he ſoon became perfectly eaſy: beſides, it ſoon occurred to him, that ſuch a parading preparation was very unneceſſary for the execution of a deſign upon a man's pocket only.

The moment he entered the room, every piece of furniture in it had ſo ſplendid an appearance, that he could not poſſibly help ſuppoſing his perſon, and not his purſe, to be the object aimed at; and his conjectures were ſoon confirmed, by the entrance of a very fine woman, who in a ſhort time came to the point in the following words: "I am mar-
"ried, Sir; but to a man who is
"thoroughly diſagreeable to me in
"every

" every reſpect, and who renders " himſelf ſtill more ſo, by prefer- " ring every woman he beholds, to " me. I think, therefore, that I " have a right to make repriſals. I " ſaw you this evening at the play, " and not imagining you to be of a " humour to fruſtrate my intentions, " I ventured to ſend for you: I re- " quire nothing from you but Love " for Love, and inviolable ſecrecy; " and, therefore, hope I ſhall not " be diſappointed."

Nothing could have given Jack more ſatisfaction, than the freedom of this declaration: it was exceedingly to his taſte; *quite in his way:* and the replies which he made ſufficiently convinced the Lady, that ſhe had not miſtaken her man.

When he found himſelf at home in the morning, after having ſpent the

the time very agreeably with his *Incognita*, he found himſelf alſo richer, by fifty guineas, than he was when, in ſo myſterious a manner, conveyed to her.

For ſome time he repeated his nocturnal viſits. Burton, and his other gay companions, continually watched him, and teazed him, in order to find out from what liberal ſpring his purſe was repleniſhed: but he not only refuſed to gratify their curioſity; he had alſo addreſs enough to elude all their endeavours to diſcover the capital ſecret, which he had promiſed to confine to his own breaſt.

However, they ſoon began to *ſmoke* him, as he dreſſed more gaily, played higher, and, in ſhort, kept pace with them in moſt of their pleaſurable purſuits: but as nothing had

had really tranſpired detrimental to his character, he paſſed in the world for a man of a very eaſy fortune.

As ſuch a man Jack had been looked upon by Mr. Hyde; who, conſequently, thought him a deſireable huſband for his daughter.

Myra did not ſpend her time agreeably to her wiſhes at Hampſtead. The recollection of *paſt* moments, hindered her from receiving any pleaſure from the *preſent*.—Wilks's image, forcibly pictured by her imagination, made but too deep an impreſſion on her mind for its peace. She wiſhed ſhe had not ſeen him.—She wiſhed ſhe had never known him at all, ſince her acquaintance with him had only occaſioned her removal from the place in which ſhe enjoyed his entertaining company.

Jack, not being in the leaſt inclined to give up his Liberty to a wife, felt no diſquieting ſenſations in the abſence of Miſs Hyde; but an old Gentleman, who had often ſeen her at her father's, began to miſs *her* as much as *ſhe* miſſed Wilks.

This Gentleman, having a large fortune, and no objection to a young wife, came to Mr. Hyde's one day, enquired after Myra, and generouſly offered to take her without a ſhilling, and to make a handſome ſettlement on her.

Hyde, tranſported with an offer which exceeded his moſt ſanguine expectations with regard to the diſpoſal of his daughter, jumped at it; ſent for Myra to town, and, on her arrival, immediately informed her,

that

that ſhe muſt prepare to receive Mr. Bond as her lover.

Myra turned pale as death at this unwelcome intelligence; but as ſoon as ſhe could recover herſelf, told her father, that it was impoſſible for her to be happy with him.—"I hope, "therefore, Sir," continued ſhe, "that you will not inſiſt upon my "marrying a man ſo very unſuit-"able to me."

"Indeed but I *ſhall* inſiſt upon "your marrying him," ſaid Mr. Hyde, "and I will have the cere-"mony performed as ſoon as poſ-"ſible.—Unſuitable!—No man can "be unſuitable, who has ſuch a for-"tune.——Will not money, girl, "make every thing eaſy?"

Myra, extremely alarmed at her father's reply, begged him earneſtly, with tears in her eyes, to ſave her

from ſo much diſtreſs, as ſhe knew ſhe ſhould be doomed to ſuffer, when married to a man ſo thoroughly diſguſting to her; and promiſed, that ſhe would never give her hand to any perſon of whom he did not approve, if he would be kind enough to let her refuſe Mr. Bond.

"There is no fear of your marrying any body whom I don't like, child; for there's nobody who will have you: and the little I ſhall be able to leave you, will hardly be ſufficient to find you in cloaths: therefore, I fancy you will think better of it."

Myra coloured exceſſively at her father's anſwer. She had always felt a great reſpect and affection for him, always gave the ſtrongeſt proof of her filial obedience; ſhe was conſequently, pained to differ from him: ſhe

was, alſo, very much mortified at his telling her, that nobody elſe would marry her.——She well knew that no man had ever made ſerious propoſals; and began to think it was better to follow her father's advice, and to endeavour to bring herſelf to like Mr. Bond.

After having conſidered and reconſidered in what manner to act, ſhe told her father, that as every thing he approved of would, ſhe was perſuaded, be conducive to her happineſs, ſhe would do exactly as he pleaſed.

Hyde, fully ſatisfied with his daughter's compliance, went directly to acquaint the old lover with her arrival in town.

Mr. Bond accordingly made his approaches in form, after a few viſits, in which he acquitted himſelf

by no means to her ſatisfaction; but thinking to make himſelf more agreeable to her, he propoſed a Ranelagh party.

As the party was evidently propoſed by him to oblige *her*, good nature, and good manners, made her think it incumbent on her to *appear* pleaſed with it: ſhe ſtrove to be ſo with the utmoſt earneſtneſs, and began to reſume all her former gaiety.

While ſhe was endeavouring to let Mr. Bond ſee, that his douceurs were not thrown away upon her, who ſhould make his appearance in the Rotunda but Jack Wilks.

He ſaw Myra in a moment; and, not having ſeen her a great while, flew to her with a particular alacrity.——So much joy, indeed, did he diſcover upon the occaſion, that it filled her heart with ſenſations which

ſhe

ſhe had not felt a long time, and crimſoned her face with bluſhes. He immediately perceived the pleaſure which his preſence had given her, and joined the party.

The evening went off with uncommon rapidity: yet as there was nothing very lover-like in Jack's behaviour, Bond took not the leaſt alarm; but, pleaſed to ſee his Miſtreſs in ſpirits, was more contented than he had been a good while, both with her and with himſelf.

Wilks being a keener phyſiognomiſt—few men, indeed, had a greater ſhare of penetration—ſoon ſaw how things went.

Calling, next day, on Myra, he rallied her not a little on her venerable lover.

Having, by that time, pretty deeply reflected on the prodigious

difference between the two men, ſhe was hurt by the compariſon, and burſt into tears.

Jack, though naturally apt to be wrong-headed, was far from being ill-natured: he ſhewed, therefore, no ſmall concern at having ſaid any thing to make her uneaſy; and threw out many conſolatory expreſſions: he could not, however, help exclaiming, "But how, in the name "of wonder, my dear Miſs Hyde, "came you to think of giving en-"couragement to an old man to "hope for your favour!"

"I do aſſure you, Sir," ſaid ſhe, "that I never ſhould have thought "of him: but women, you very "well know, are not always at li-"berty to diſpoſe of themſelves; "and you need not be told, that "thoſe who have the care of us,

"may

" may happen to entertain opinions " oppoſite to ours."

" Undoubtedly," replied he: " the commoneſt thing in the " world; but were I in *your* ſitua- " tion I ſhould, I believe, nay, I am " certain I ſhould follow my own " fancy: and if *yours* leads you to " marry that frightful piece of anti- " quity, I am egregiouſly out in my " reckoning; that's all."

A half-ſuppreſſed ſigh with, " What would you adviſe me to " do?"——convinced him, that the movements of her mind were not hidden from his penetrating eye.—Her interrogatory was an artful one; and would have given a fair opening to a man poſſeſſed of more modeſty than fell to Jack's lot, to put her into the road to do what ſhe liked beſt. But though her queſtion was uttered

in ſuch a manner, that her meaning could not poſſibly be miſunderſtood, there was ſomething in the articulation of it, and ſomething of a confuſion in her looks during the utterance of it, which excited more compaſſion in Jack's boſom than he had uſually felt upon ſuch occaſions.

He immediately replied, "Not to "marry the man whom you don't "like."

This anſwer naturally produced another queſtion.

"You would not, ſurely, have "me diſobey my father?"

"I know what I ſhould do if he "was *my* father," replied Wilks: "not all the powers on earth ſhould "hinder *me* from acting with the "freedom to which we are entitled "by nature: Liberty is only an "empty ſound, a mere echo, if we

" are implicitly to obey every ty-
" rant's capricious command; and
" by ſo doing, forge our own fet-
" ters.——No, no, Miſs Hyde, let
" nobody either perſuade or compel
" you to any thing, againſt which
" your inclination revolts.——Be
" firm in your reſolution,——pre-
" ſerve your Liberty inviolate to the
" laſt moment of your life."

A ſecond ſigh from Myra's gentle boſom prevented her from anſwering him.——She was really at a loſs for a reply; as ſhe was not a little diſappointed to find, that Mr. Wilks's romantic regard for Liberty, which he always expreſſed with the fervor of a rapturous enthuſiaſt, would, moſt probably, deter him from entering into the marriage ſtate.—It is very true, indeed, that the bands of Hymen were conſidered

by Jack as the ſhackles of ſlavery; and he never had, therefore, the leaſt deſire to be hampered by them.

Myra's ſilence, her amiable confuſion, and her ſtrict attention to his *free* advice, with regard to her filial behaviour, gave Jack, at laſt, ſome reaſon to believe, that he was not totally an object of indifference in her eyes; and that if he could infuſe a ſufficient quantity of the higheſt rectified ſpirit of Liberty into her head, ſo as to make her rebel againſt her father's deſpotic authority, and to reject the old fellow, he might, in time, gain her upon his own terms.

With theſe views he repeated his viſits, and cloſely and warmly plied her with encomiums on his favourite paſſion: declaring, that Liberty was the ſpring of all our happineſs and

glory;

glory; that all reſtraint was an affront to the free-agency with which we were born.——So plauſible, in ſhort, were his arguments in favour of unlimited Freedom; and with ſo much warmth and elocution did he deliver them, that Myra, who had neither contemptible nor bad principles, was ſtaggered with them; and, in conſequence of the impreſſion which they made upon her mind, ſhe felt a ſtrong deſire to get rid of a man, who, every hour, grew more and more diſagreeable, as his rival became every hour otherwiſe. She, therefore, reſolved to tell her father plainly, that ſhe would never be married to Mr. Bond.

She did ſo.

His anſwer was, "You muſt either determine to marry him in a

"few

" few days, or expect me to have no-
" thing farther to ſay to you."

Shocked at this laconic reply, ſhe withdrew in ſilence, in order to conſider how ſhe ſhould proceed.

At his next viſit, Jack furniſhed her with powerful arguments, to enable her to oppoſe her father, if he ſhould ſay any more to her upon the ſubject.

He renewed the ſubject; and was quite aſtoniſhed to hear his daughter inveigh bitterly againſt parental tyranny, and to plead vehemently in behalf of a free choice, which every father, ſhe ſaid, ought to allow of: adding, that the arbitrary proceedings of a parent, with regard to the marriage of a child, exculpated that child from the charge of diſobedience.

The

The old gentleman ſtared at her with aſtoniſhment, and, for ſome moments, doubted the goodneſs of his ears; but when he found, after having both rallied her, and reaſoned with her, that his hearing had not been impaired; that ſhe ſtrenuouſly maintained, and endeavoured to juſtify, her undutiful opinions; he peremptorily threatened to turn her out of doors, if ſhe did not inſtantly comply with his commands, to receive Mr. Bond as the man who was to be her huſband in a few days.

Oppoſition is generally of an inflammatory nature: Myra, in the height of her vexation, painted her father's obſtinacy to Wilks, in the moſt deteſtable colours; and he, who ſaw no other way of accompliſhing his deſigns upon her, but by animating her to fly from her father's protection,

tion, ſpurred her to contend with him.——She followed his advice; and, on her again refuſing Bond, he bade her leave his ſight and his houſe directly, as her continued diſobedience proved her to be no child of his.

Miſs Hyde, *then*, and not till then, began to think that ſhe had gone too far. She was ſtill, indeed, reſolved not to be married to Bond; but ſhe wiſhed to ſoften her father, as ſhe dreaded the being deſerted by him beyond any thing, but the union with a man who, as he was forced upon her, became more odious to her than ever.

Mr. Hyde would hear of no objections to the man whom he had choſen for her.——Marriage with him, or expulſion: he would not liſten to any compromiſe.

Myra,

Myra, finding him immoveable, with a flood of tears, which ſhewed with how much reluctance ſhe removed herſelf from a father, who, till then, had been very kind to her, returned to Mrs. Liſter at Hampſtead.

With a heavy heart, and with eyes almoſt ſwelled out of her head with weeping, ſhe related the treatment ſhe had received at home.

As Mrs. Liſter had always been particularly fond of her, and had not only welcomed her to her houſe with pleaſure, but frequently intreated her company when her father was loth to part with her, ſhe had *ſome* reaſon to expect a moſt friendly reception from that lady; eſpecially at a time when ſhe was driven, in a manner, from home, and apparently in great diſtreſs.

Thoſe

Thoſe who look for diſintereſted friendſhip, will often be deceived: the touchſtone of friendſhip is adverſity; and who, among the two ſexes, can ſtand ſo trying a teſt?——I do not ſay, that there is no ſuch Being in the world as a diſintereſted friend; but certainly, he is not a very common object.

Mrs. Liſter, as ſoon as ſhe gueſſed, by Myra's ſudden return and dejected countenance, that things went not on ſo ſmoothly as uſual, immediately put on a face ſuitable to the occaſion, received her with remarkable gravity, and was rather ſhy of enquiring into the cauſe of her altered appearance; throwing out not a few hints alſo, that ſhe expected her nephew from Ireland, and ſome particular friends from Briſtol, who would fill her houſe; and that ſhe wiſhed, indeed,

deed, it was in her power to make more beds.

Myra was, at firſt, too much oppreſſed with grief, to attend cloſely to what ſounded in her ears, mere idle chat; as ſhe, like other people in affliction, had rather wiſhed to have heard Mrs. Liſter make ſome efforts to alleviate her ſorrow, by heartily ſympathizing with her, than to turn the converſation to quite other matters.——But it is impoſſible to expreſs the diſquietude which ſhe endured, when ſhe found that Mrs. Liſter was actually eager to ſend her away from her, as a perſon who might be very troubleſome. She therefore, but not without many ſighs, reſolved to leave her houſe, not chuſing to ſtay to be burthenſome to a woman, once ſo fond of her. However, as ſhe really knew

not

not whither to go, ſhe accepted of a mighty cool invitation to dine, in order to gain time to conſider what meaſures to take.

Before they ſat down to dinner, a young gentleman of Mrs. Liſter's acquaintance came in his phaeton to ſpend the remainder of the day with her, and was received in a manner ſuitable to the figure which he made. He was the only ſon of a Colonel Wyndham, a man of family and fortune, and diſtantly related to Mrs. Liſter.

Mr. Wyndham was finely formed; and had a very pleaſing face, without being effeminately handſome. His dreſs was extremely elegant, and in all his looks and movements the man of faſhion was ſtrikingly conſpicuous.

With

With theſe advantages, natural and acquired, he had others, which contributed to render him as amiable as he was agreeable. He had a ſtrong well-cultivated underſtanding, and a great deal of manly ſenſibility.

At the firſt ſight of ſo fine a girl as Myra, he flattered himſelf, that ſhe would make a conſiderable addition to the pleaſure of the day; but the melancholy with which her face, on a nearer view, was overſpread, and the ſweet languor in her eyes, together with the bewitching modeſty of her whole carriage, induced him to believe, that ſhe was unhappy. She was, indeed, extremely ſo; and her infelicity increaſed in proportion to its being obſerved by Mr. Wyndham, whoſe perſon and behaviour improved, every moment, upon her. She reflected, with the deepeſt

deepeſt regret, on the indiſcreet part which ſhe had acted, and her *then* diſagreeable ſituation; though the remarks ſhe made on her new admirer's deportment, made her ſtill leſs inclined to bury herſelf in the arms of Bond.——Yet, when ſhe conſidered what a dreadful change a few hours had occaſioned in her condition, ſhe was inconceivably diſtreſſed.——Her diſtreſs may be eaſily accounted for.——

A little time, a very little time *before*, ſhe was the happy, the beloved daughter of a man of character, and in a very reſpectable way of life. She had been educated genteely; and from the propriety of her own behaviour, as well as the reputable light in which he appeared, had recommended herſelf to the notice and acquaintance of ſeveral people of

faſhion,

faſhion, who had even profeſſed a friendſhip for her.——But now——what a difference in her ſituation? Turned out of a father's houſe, driven from his protection, hopeleſs of being reſtored to his paternal favour, unleſs ſhe could bring herſelf to comply with his will in a point on which ſhe could not poſſibly agree with him.——She certainly, however, would not have gone ſuch lengths, had ſhe not been inſtigated by Wilks; who, from a falſe notion of Liberty, and a fond deſire to make her a convert to *his* ſentiments in every reſpect, had greatly warped her judgment in behalf of a conduct, which now appeared highly reprehenſible; and ſhe could not help prognoſticating ſtill worſe conſequences, which, pictured by fancy, made her tremble.

With

With ſuch diſheartening ideas, with ſuch melancholy reflections, and with ſuch alarming apprehenſions, ſhe appeared confuſed, embarraſſed, diſconcerted.

Wyndham, though a ſtranger, ſoon ſaw that ſomething lay heavy on her mind, and gave her great diſquiet: and her diſquiet was, probably, perceived by him ſooner than by any body elſe, as the beauty of her perſon, and the numberleſs graces in her behaviour, in ſpite of the load upon her ſpirits, had ſurpriſingly intereſted him in her favour, on ſo ſhort an acquaintance.

Myra was not leſs pleaſed with *him*, as he was, beyond all doubt, infinitely ſuperior in every look and geſture, ſetting aſide the ſtriking *tout enſemble* of his whole perſon, to any man

man with whom she had ever conversed.

Wilks had, it is true, very much attracted her attention by his agreeable vivacity, and entertaining conversation; and as her heart was disengaged when he flew to rescue her from a set of wretches, unworthy of being called gentlemen, scarce deserving to be ranked among the human species, she felt a kind of grateful prepossession; but when she contrasted him with Wyndham, the amiable Wyndham, the little merit with which he had before dazzled her, was almost totally eclipsed by his rival's superior lustre.——Besides, he had been, in some measure, the cause of her appearing in such despicable colours in her own eyes, and in so degrading a light to her friends;

and therefore was the more lowered in her eſtimation.

The reflections which aroſe in her mind on her unhappy condition, which ſhe principally attributed to the pernicious advice of Wilks, added to thoſe excited by Mrs. Liſter's mortifying carriage to her, almoſt overpowered her.

Wyndham, hearing her ſigh heavily, while he walked by her ſide in Mrs. Liſter's garden, who, juſt at that moment, had left her company, to give ſome directions to her ſervants, was touched with the certainty of her being afflicted, and, gently ſeizing her hand, ſaid, with a look equally tender, reſpectful, and compaſſionate, "I am very much concerned, Miſs Hyde,"——for ſo he had heard Mrs. Liſter call her, when ſhe

ſhe vouchſafed to take any notice of her,—— " to find that I was not " miſtaken, when I feared that " ſomething deeply diſturbed your " mind. But poſſibly," continued he, looking more earneſtly at her, " I may ſtill be deceived, and the " recollection of ſome pleaſing in- " terviews with a favoured lover " may have drawn thoſe heart-felt " aſpirations from you."

She ſtarted, ſhe bluſhed, on being thus ſuddenly interrogated by the very perſon who had, in a great meaſure, occaſioned her emotions; but had not the power to withdraw her hand, which he gently detained till ſhe juſt recovered enough from her confuſion to ſay, " Indeed, Sir, my " thoughts were engaged upon what " gives me extreme anxiety.——I " ſhould not, however, have ſo far

" forgotten myſelf, as to diſcover it
" in company; and, by ſo doing,
" to pay an ill compliment to Mrs.
" Liſter, and her friend."

" Your behaviour, Madam, ſtands
" not in need of any apology: Mrs.
" Liſter's friend is ſincerely deſirous
" of becoming yours, if you will
" honour him ſo much as to let him
" know, in what manner he may
" make himſelf moſt ſerviceable to
" you."

A ſecond bluſh, accompanied with a modeſt waving of her head, was all her reply.

The Lady of the houſe ſoon joined her gueſts, and turned the converſation upon quite different topics.

To thoſe topics Mr. Wyndham paid not the attention which he had uſually done, as he became more and more affected by Myra's melancholy appear-

appearance; the cauſe of which he eagerly wiſhed to know, and as ardently longed to remove it.

At dinner ſhe ate little, nor could any endeavours make her chearful. She was really ſo loſt in thought, and ſo puzzled to hit upon a place for her abode, that ſhe did not conſider how ſhe ſhould get to London, till the afternoon was far advanced. ——Myra had come down with a deſign to remain with Mrs. Liſter till her father could be prevailed on to recall her; but as that lady, in the true ſpirit of modern friendſhip, diſcovered no inclination to impede her departure, on finding that ſhe was deſerted by her father, ſhe had too much pride to ſtay uninvited.—— Collecting her ſcattered thoughts, therefore, together as well as ſhe could, ſhe deſired Mrs. Liſter to let

her ſervant try to procure her a place to town in the ſtage.

Mrs. Liſter chearfully complied with her requeſt, and diſpatched her ſervant immediately, who brought word that all the coaches were full.

Mr. Wyndham, then, very reſpectfully offered to accommodate Miſs Hyde in his phaeton.

She heſitated: ſhe knew not what reply to make, for ſeveral reaſons.

Mrs. Liſter, who would have warmly oppoſed her conſent to ſuch a conveyance, offered by a man almoſt a ſtranger to her, had ſhe been upon good terms with her father, now very readily undertook to anſwer for her: "Oh! aye,—I never "thought of that;—Mr. Wyndham "will take care of you."

Myra ſaw her motive, and deſpiſed her heartily for it, but was too much affected

affected by the alteration in her behaviour, to know how to deſcribe her feelings; and her uneaſineſs was the more acute, as ſhe could not, from the confuſion of her ideas, think on a proper perſon to fly to, after having met with ſo diſcouraging a diſappointment. She had looked upon this very Mrs. Liſter, who was in ſuch a hurry to ſend her away, as a woman who would have received her with open arms, and treated her with the moſt cordial regard.—— When ſhe reflected, therefore, upon her unfriendly carriage, and felt herſelf baniſhed from her only ſecure aſylum, her father's houſe, by her own imprudence, without knowing whither to repair for ſafety or ſubſiſtence, tears ruſhed into her eyes.— She roſe from table, and left the room.

Wyndham, who would have pitied any female, apparently ſo diſtreſſed,—youth and beauty out of the queſtion,—and whoſe compaſſion for Myra roſe in proportion to her lovelineſs, told Mrs. Liſter, that he feared her young friend had met with ſomething to diſcompoſe her.

"She may, poſſibly, be glad of your "aſſiſtance," continued he, riſing to leave her at liberty to follow her, not thinking himſelf, on ſo ſhort an acquaintance, authoriſed to act agreeably to his wiſhes.

"Yes," replied ſhe, ſtopping him, "ſhe will be very glad of any body's "aſſiſtance ſoon, I believe.—Fool-"iſh girl!—to quarrel with her fa-"ther about a wild young fellow."

"There is a lover in the caſe "then?" ſaid Wyndham, with an emotion

emotion which he ſtrove to ſuppreſs.

" Aye;—one Wilks has perſuaded
" her to run away from her fa-
" ther, I think: and ſo ſhe came to
" me, expecting me to take her in
" and keep her; but, indeed, I
" know too much of the world to
" be guilty of ſo great a weakneſs.
" Were I to encourage all the girls
" who leave their fathers to run after
" fellows, my houſe would never be
" empty, and I might juſtly forfeit
" my reputation as well as they."

" There is an affair, then, be-
" tween her and this Wilks?"

" Undoubtedly.—He is, I have
" heard, a man of a very ſlight cha-
" racter;" (though, indeed, ſhe knew nothing about him, till Myra told her of him) " and will, I ſup-
" poſe, be ſoon weary of her.——

" I wonder what ſhe intends to do,
" when *he* leaves her in the lurch.—
" But be it how it will, ſhe comes
" no more here: I will clear my
" houſe of her.——I preſſed her to
" accept of *your* offer, becauſe *you*
" *men*, I know, never ſuffer in your
" characters by being ſeen with girls
" of this ſort: but were *I* to har-
" bour her in *my* houſe, I ſhould be
" guilty of the greateſt impropriety,
" ſetting aſide the ſcandal, as ſhe has
" turned out ſuch an undutiful crea-
" ture. Beſides, her father, who is
" in the law, may come upon me,
" you know, for detaining his daugh-
" ter; and charge me with encou-
" raging her to take herſelf from
" home. It will, conſequently, be
" quite unſafe, as well as mon-
" ſtrouſly indiſcreet, to let her re-
" main here a ſingle night: and you

" can

" can ſet her down, you know, as
" ſoon as you come upon the ſtones;
" and then ſhe may go where ſhe
" will."

" If ſhe really is in love with
" Wilks, ſhe has no deſire, I ima-
" gine, to ſtay here, but wants to
" be with *him?*"

" To be ſure ſhe does,—but he
" may not be ready to receive her, you
" know; girls are very expenſive to
" you young fellows ſometimes."

" To me they never yet have
" been; but were I poſſeſſed of a
" girl with Miſs Hyde's perſonal
" charms, and winning manners,
" I ſhould not ſpare any expence to
" render myſelf deſerving of her
" love."

" And ſo ruin yourſelf.——No,
" no, my young friend, you are bet-
" ter as you are; and as you have

" been ſober and good ſo long, let
" me perſuade you to ſtay till you
" marry. A wife, ſhould ſhe prove
" extravagant, brings ſomething to
" ſupport her expenſive taſte;
" whereas a miſtreſs runs away
" with every thing."

" There are very different kinds
" of women," ſaid Wyndham, with
a ſmile of contempt. " But me-
" thinks, Mrs. Liſter," added he,
" as you once profeſſed *ſome* eſteem
" for this unhappy young lady, it is
" a great pity that you do not endea-
" vour to prevail on her to return
" to her father, and to give up a
" man who, by your account, is
" not worthy of her."

" Oh! not I.——He is, I dare
" ſay, as worthy of *her* as ſhe is of
" *him*. When once a girl comes to
" fly in her father's face, it is all

" over

" over with her: I never knew any
" of theſe flirts come to good in my
" life.—When they take a bad turn,
" their buſineſs is done. Some peo-
" ple, I know, have a vaſt notion of
" their reforming.—Nonſenſe.—
" Now I firmly believe, that ſhe who
" is a —— to-day, will be a ——
" to-morrow.——That's *my* opini-
" on.——I never could be induced
" to take any ſervants out of the
" Magdalen-houſe; not I: people
" may talk of their being penitents,
" but I dare ſwear they will be
" proſtitutes to the end of their
" lives."

Wyndham, beginning by this time to hold Mrs. Liſter's morals extremely cheap, as well as to grow tired of her garrulity, coolly replied, "It is " mighty happy for the poor girls,

" Madam,

" Madam, that every body is not of " your opinion."

Myra, at that inſtant, returned to them, having wiped away her tears, and compoſed herſelf as well as ſhe could.

Wyndham, on her entrance, roſe, reached a chair, and paid her all poſſible reſpect; but neither of them ſaid much to Mrs. Liſter, who was uncommonly loquacious.

Early in the evening he ordered his carriage, becauſe he naturally imagined, that Mrs. Liſter's behaviour could not be agreeable to Myra; and that ſhe would, of courſe, be glad to be removed from her. He complimented her, however, with ſaying, that he would wait *her time*. A graceful motion of her head, without any verbal anſwer, ſufficiently convinced him, that ſhe

was

was quite prepared to leave Hampſtead. Accordingly, he aſſiſted her in getting into the chaiſe, very happy to find her ſo willing to put herſelf under his protection.—She willingly, indeed, committed herſelf to *his* care; for her mind was ſo much embarraſſed, that ſhe was not in a condition to think about her own conduct.

During their ride, he ſtrove to amuſe her, by entering upon ſeveral ſubjects; but ſhe was abſolutely incapable of carrying on a converſation.

When he aſked her where he ſhould ſet her down, ſhe burſt into tears.

Having been conſidering, the greateſt part of the day, whither ſhe ſhould go, till ſhe could apply to her father for leave to return home, though

though hopeleſs of obtaining *that* leave, as ſhe continued averſe to the conditions which had provoked her diſobedience, ſhe could think of no place but a little ſhop, the owner of which had been, ſome years before, a ſervant in the family, but had married, and was a widow.

Wyndham, more affected by her tears than he thought he ſhould have been, begged her to be compoſed; telling her, that if ſhe would but truſt *him* with the occaſion of her diſtreſs, he would do every thing in his power to alleviate it, if he could not totally remove it: hinting, at the ſame time, though diſtantly, that he already knew what he wiſhed ſo earneſtly to hear from her own lips.

Myra, having a quick apprehenſion, immediately gueſſed that he muſt have had his information from

Mrs.

Mrs. Liſter, who was no longer her friend, and who, poſſibly, had exhibited her to him in the moſt unfavourable colours. She, therefore, aſſumed courage enough to tell her own ſtory: avoiding, however, all particulars which were, in her opinion, trivial and of no conſequence; and entirely omitting the mention of Wilks. But as Wyndham had heard ſo much about that gentleman, the ſuppreſſion of his name made her appear in no advantageous light to him.——In ſhort, he ſuſpected her ſincerity. Yet there was ſuch a *charm* about her, her carriage was ſo captivating, that he ſwallowed every thing ſhe ſaid with avidity; and ſtrove, by every art he was maſter of, to calm the tempeſt in her mind, and ſooth her into peace: flattering himſelf, that if he could ſucceed in

pleaſing her, he might, in time, ſupplant the man who had made himſelf of ſo much importance in her eyes, and ſo deep an impreſſion on her heart; naturally ſuppoſing too, that ſhe who had not been coy to *one* man, would not be cruel to another, if he could make himſelf agreeable to her.

Wyndham, though no coxcomb, was, nevertheleſs, too conſcious of his attractions, which always ſecured him a flattering reception in a female circle, to imagine that Miſs Hyde would be inſenſible to them.——He was, indeed, ſo handſome, and his manners were ſo inſinuating, that he was irreſiſtible. He had not yet, however, taken any woman into *keeping*, neither was he an advocate for illegal cohabitation, being too great an admirer of delicacy in the fair

fair ſex, to endure the common herd of kept miſtreſſes, and too much a man of honour, to triumph over an innocent heart, untainted with vice, by the ſnares of ſeduction —A girl, with good principles, artfully deluded out of her virtue, would, he thought, feel the ſtain upon her character too ſtrongly, to enjoy any happineſs herſelf, and to communicate any to him; and the hardened proſtitute could never, he knew, be in *his* eyes an amiable object.

With theſe laudable ſentiments, he would have been at a loſs how to proceed with regard to Myra, had he given himſelf leave to reflect on *her* ſituation, and on *his own*: but he was too much under the influence of the *belle paſſion*, though not ſenſible of its operation on him, to calculate the conſequences of an acquain-

quaintance with a woman ſo perfectly pleaſing as Myra was.

When they came near London, ſhe, with freſh ſymptoms of diſquietude, begged him to ſet her down at the corner of Great-Ruſſel-ſtreet.

"Do you then," ſaid he, "go to "any perſon there with whom you "are acquainted?"

"No, Sir; but as my friend lives "in the neighbourhood, I rather "chuſe to walk to her houſe."

This ſpeech was accompanied with many thanks for his politeneſs, and a preſſing intreaty to ſtop.

"Not till you have told me "where I may ſee you again," ſaid he, "at leaſt; if you will not ſuffer "me to conduct you to the houſe "you are going to."

"I can

"I can do neither, at preſent, "Sir," replied ſhe, bluſhing extremely; "but if I am ever permit-"ted to return to my father, you "will, I am ſure, be kindly re-"ceived by him, and he will thank "you for your care of me."

It was with the greateſt reluctance that he prevailed on himſelf to conſent to her requeſt. However, as ſoon as he had carefully lifted her from the carriage, he made a ſign to his man to follow her at a diſtance, while ſhe, too much engaged by her own ſenſations to attend to what paſſed about her, walked to the humble habitation of Mrs. Bodely.

To Mrs. Bodely ſhe very ſoon, after her arrival, related all the converſations between her and her father concerning Mr. Bond; the ſudden coolneſs of Mrs. Liſter, and the re-

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ſolution which ſhe had made to write to her father for his permiſſion to return.

Mrs. Bodely ſtrenuouſly adviſed her to ſollicit that permiſſion; but perſuaded her not to think of her letter till the next morning, as ſhe ſeemed to ſtand very much in need both of refreſhment and reſt, that ſhe might be the better able to conſider about her affairs.

Myra complied with Mrs. Bodely's perſuaſions.—She made a ſlight ſupper, and went to bed.

She went to bed, but ſhe could not cloſe her eyes.—The morning came, but with it came no relief.

She roſe, however, and wrote a very affecting letter to her father, in which ſhe painted the miſeries of a compulſive marriage with great ſtrength of colouring; and, at the

ſame time, warmly expatiated on the cruelty of a parent's expoſing a child to numberleſs ſituations, fatal both to her perſon and her peace; concluding with a penitential acknowledgment of her indiſcreet conduct, a pathetick ſolicitation for his pardon, and an earneſt intreaty to be reſtored to his favour.

This letter, ſtruck off while ſhe was harraſſed by the moſt alarming apprehenſions, and while ſhe began to be ſoftened by the tendereſt of all paſſions, was conſequently penned in a more energetic ſtyle than could have been expected from a girl ſo young and ſo unpractiſed in ſuch kinds of epiſtolary compoſitions.—But ſhe wrote from the heart.

When her letter was finiſhed, ſhe prevailed on Mrs. Bodely to carry it, and to deliver it into her father's

own

own hands; that ſhe might, if he had any deſire to interrogate her about his daughter's behaviour, be ready to give him an exact, and, ſhe hoped, a ſatisfactory account of it.

Mrs. Bodely faithfully executed the commiſſion ſhe was charged with, but found the old gentleman not at all diſpoſed to grant his daughter's requeſt, unleſs ſhe would ſubſcribe to the terms which he had inſiſted upon before her departure from him.

Myra returned Mrs. Bodely many thanks, and very ſincere ones, for the trouble ſhe had taken; but was overwhelmed with grief, at the diſcouraging news ſhe brought: doubly ſevere was the affliction which ſhe felt; for ſhe was more averſe to the terms to which her father was ſo obſtinately attached, and more deter-

mined againſt them than ever.—In this diſtreſsful condition ſhe knew not, immediately, what meaſures to purſue; and was, therefore, neceſſitated to remain, for the preſent, under Mrs. Bodely's roof.

Wilks having more than once called at Mr. Hyde's during his daughter's abſence, and learned from the ſervants, at laſt, where ſhe was, came to ſee her at Mrs. Bodely's.

Myra, not knowing that Mrs. Liſter had thrown out any thing to her diſadvantage on *his* account, received him with civility: his converſation had ever been lively and entertaining, and he had *once* been of conſiderable ſervice to her. Gratitude, therefore, demanded, ſhe thought, *ſome* returns; and though Mr. Wyndham had effaced the impreſſion which *he* had once made on

her tender heart, he had, ever ſince her firſt acquaintance with him, appeared to be her friend, and was entitled, in her opinion, to a polite reception.

Actuated by theſe motives, ſhe received him politely: ſhe was alſo rather pleaſed than diſpleaſed with his company;—(the wretched are ever flattered with the appearance of friendſhip)—and he, obſerving the ſatisfaction which his preſence occaſioned, reſolved to avail himſelf of it; but as he knew her to be a woman of character, and believed her to be virtuous, he rightly conjectured, that matters were not to be precipitated.——He, therefore, determined, agreeably to his uſual way of proceeding on ſimilar occaſions, to conceal his deſigns till a favourable oppor-

opportunity preſented itſelf for the accompliſhment of them.

Wyndham, from whoſe mind Miſs Hyde had not been abſent from the moment of his ſeeing her ſafely houſed in Ruſſel-ſtreet, but who, fearful of giving offence, had not ventured to viſit her at Mrs. Bodely's, hearing from his man, (whoſe vigilance was unwearied, in order to procure intelligence about her) that Mr. Wilks was frequently admitted, felt ſenſations ſtirring in his breaſt, diſquieting beyond expreſſion; ſenſations which he never had felt before; and which robbed him of all his tranquility.——Love, vexation, jealouſy, diſappointment, all combined to diſturb his repoſe. Yet, upon reflection, he thought that Wilks and the lady might be, perhaps, ere long, tired of each other;

and that he might then not unreaſonably hope to ſuperſede his rival. He alſo conſidered, that as ſhe admitted the viſits of one man, ſhe could not be offended with thoſe of another. He, therefore, reſolved to make an attempt to ſee her.

Accidentally, he pitched upon the very day when Jack, elated with the apparent ſatisfaction with which ſhe had received him, made ſome oblique propoſals, which were conſtrued in a manner ſo contrary to his expectations, that he could not help exerting himſelf more vehemently in behalf of unbounded Liberty than he had yet done; declaring, with the moſt forcible expreſſions, accompanied with not a few nervous oaths, that no connection between the two ſexes could be deſirable or durable, if it was attended with any reſtric-

tions

tions whatever; as the ſlighteſt reſtraint only created ſatiety and diſguſt. In ſhort, he flouriſhed with ſo much ardor and amplification in favour of his ruling paſſion, that Myra began to ſee through the dangerous tendency of his deſigns; and would have anſwered him immediately, in a way ſufficient to deprive him of his criminal hopes, had not the conſciouſneſs of her having laid herſelf open to the inſults offered her, by leaving her father's houſe, checked that honeſt reſentment, which would otherwiſe have furniſhed her with a reply ſuitable to the affront to her underſtanding and her virtue.

Wilks, encouraged by her aukward and ill-timed ſilence, was juſt going to renew his attack, when Wyndham entered the room.

Wyndham felt more confuſion, if poſſible, at the diſcovery of ſuch a *tête-a-tête*, (though he had no reaſon not to expect it, from Mrs. Liſter's intelligence) than Myra ſhewed at his unlooked-for appearance.

Jack, ſeldom diſconcerted, never out of countenance, was only chagrined at the interruption occaſioned to *the manœuvres* of the moment; as he really began to reckon upon his elocution, and to promiſe himſelf ſucceſs. However, as he found ſhe ſaw other company, (not being ſo ſcrupulouſly delicate as Wyndham, who could not bear the thoughts of ſharing the heart of the woman whom he admired, with another) and was very ſenſible that he could not ſupport her himſelf, he roſe, and with a ſignificant glance at Myra,

bowing

bowing careleſsly to his ſuppoſed rival, walked down ſtairs.

He had been gone ſome time, before the diſconcerted Myra could recover herſelf enough to ſpeak.

Wyndham opened his mouth more than once, but nothing iſſued from it of any ſort of conſequence.

At length the affront which Myra had received, and which was now remembered by her with a thouſand aggravating reflections, ſo much increaſed her emotions, that ſhe appeared in Wyndham's eyes a ſtill more amiable, more pitiable object, than he had yet beheld her; he was, conſequently, doubly deſirous of rendering himſelf neceſſary to her, not without hopes of being able to ſucceed according to his wiſhes. He, therefore, addreſſed her in the following terms: "I have, with the

" greateſt difficulty imaginable,
" Madam, denied myſelf the plea-
" ſure of waiting on you before;
" nor ſhould I have now diſobeyed
" your commands, fearful of giving
" you the ſlighteſt offence, could I
" have ſupported a longer abſence
" from you.——I have many apo-
" logies to make for this intruſion;
" but am ſanguine enough to believe
" that you will pardon it.——You
" are ſtill, I ſee, Miſs Hyde, in a
" dejected ſtate: your dejection fills
" me with an anxiety which I can-
" not deſcribe; and I ſhall not be
" happy, if you refuſe to inform me
" by what means I may contribute
" to its removal."

She bluſhed, ſhe ſighed, without making any reply for ſome time; but on being repeatedly preſſed to indulge him with an anſwer, ſhe lift-

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ed up her fine blue eyes, and with ineffable ſweetneſs, but with tremulous accent, ſaid, that nobody could relieve her but her father; that ſhe was very much obliged to him for his civilities, but that ſhe muſt again intreat him to forbear his viſits, as ſhe could not with any propriety receive them.

"I will endeavour to act con-
"formably to your deſire," replied he, "in every reſpect; but when I
"ſee that you do not refuſe admit-
"tance to all men, and at the ſame
"time know myſelf to be as eager,
"if not more ſo, than any body, to
"aſſiſt you in any ſhape, why muſt
"I alone, Miſs Hyde, be deprived
"of the happineſs of waiting on
"you?"

This ſpeech increaſed the colour in Myra's cheeks. "I well know,"

continued he, " that the gentleman
" who juſt now quitted the room,
" ſtands very high in your favour;
" but were I ſuffered to improve my
" acquaintance with you, my un-
" wearied aſſiduities would, I flat-
" ter myſelf, convince you, that no
" man breathing can be more ſin-
" cerely your admirer, and your
" friend, than *I* am."

" The gentleman who left the
" room on your entrance, Sir," ſaid Myra, with more ſtrongly-glowing cheeks, " is not ſo high in my fa-
" vour as you ſeem to imagine him
" to be; but as he once delivered
" my father and me from ſome rude
" people who attacked us in the
" ſtreet, he is, I think, entitled to
" common politeneſs."

" Undoubtedly, Madam,——But
" though I have not been happy e-

" nough

" nough to be of ſo much ſervice to
" you, if you will permit me ſome-
" times to pay my reſpects to you,
" and honour me with the accept-
" ance of every thing in my power
" to offer, you may be aſſured that
" I will give you no reaſon to repent
" of your condeſcenſion."

She thanked him again; but from the diſcovery which ſhe had juſt made of Wilks's deſign, to take an improper advantage of her ſituation, ſhe began to fear that *he* alſo might be influenced by the ſame diſhonourable motives. As ſhe really felt very ſtrong emotions in his favour, ſhe did not dare to truſt herſelf in his hands; and, therefore, again begged him to leave her till ſhe could receive him at her father's.

Wyndham, finding that he could not, by his moſt earneſt perſuaſions,

prevail on her to conſent to his intreaties, bade her adieu a ſecond time, though with ſo ſtriking a regret, that the prepoſſeſſion which his firſt appearance at Hampſtead had occaſioned, was conſiderably heightened by his departure.

As ſoon as he was gone, ſhe gave herſelf up, for ſome moments, to the vexatious reflections ariſing from her unhappy condition.——Driven from her father's houſe, to which ſhe had no hopes of returning, but on terms highly diſguſting; inſulted by *one* man, who preſumed too much on his having been of ſervice to her, and not a little upon the agreeableneſs of his manners, (which, indeed, had made an impreſſion on her); and purſued by another, who had, ſhe felt, every hour more and more intereſt in her heart, but to

whom ſhe could not, with ſafety, liſten, till ſhe was aſſured of the integrity of his intentions—ſhe was certainly in a perplexing ſituation.

Thus diſtreſſed, and thus mortified at what had lately happened to her, ſhe determined to make another effort to be taken home, regardleſs of the riſque ſhe ſhould run of being wretched for the remainder of her days, by becoming the wife of Mr. Bond.

In conſequence of this determination, ſhe diſpatched Mrs. Bodely again to her father with a ſecond letter to him; wherein ſhe promiſed, on his pardoning her late diſobedience, and taking her home, to ſubmit to his pleaſure in every thing to the utmoſt of her power.

Mr. Hyde, beginning by this time, (as well as his daughter) to think

think that matters might be carried too far; and having received a long letter from Mrs. Liſter, filled with the moſt ungenerous, injurious ſuſpicions concerning her conduct, reſolved, on her making a proper ſubmiſſion, to let her return to him.

Myra, having made Mrs. Bodely ample amends for the trouble ſhe had taken on her account, when ſhe came back with the wiſhed-for anſwer to her letter, haſtened to comply with the contents of it.

Mr. Hyde and his daughter *met* with more ſatisfaction than they had parted from each other. The former told the latter, however, that he only permitted her return on the preſumption of her keeping her promiſe with regard to Mr. Bond.

She made no reply to that part of her father's addreſs to her: but her

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ſilence was not offenſive to him; for he conſtrued it into an acquieſcence with his wiſhes. On many occaſions, ſuch a conſtruction on taciturnity may be fairly made, but Myra's was very much miſtaken by Mr. Hyde; for ſhe was, in fact, more and more averſe to the ſacrifice required from her. She had ſubſcribed to the conditions above-mentioned, merely to preſerve her character, juſt upon the point of being blaſted, and to gain a little time, that ſhe might ſee if Wyndham really liked her well enough to make the ſame propoſals which Bond had made; not doubting but that her father would, on the reception of ſuch overtures, give her leave to prefer *him*; ſecretly conſoling herſelf at the ſame time with the thoughts of being ſure of a protector,

tector, ſhould her father again deſert her.

No ſooner was Myra ſettled at home, than ſhe expected both Wyndham and Bond to make their appearance.

Mr. Bond came firſt, but greatly diſappointed Mr. Hyde by his viſit.

Mr. Hyde had, during his daughter's abſence, endeavoured to account for it to the old gentleman, by telling him, that on finding her ſomewhat refractory, he had ſent her to a relation in the country, till ſhe became more tractable. But Bond, having heard from the ſervants, that ſhe preferred Jack Wilks to every body, and given ready credit to *their* information, as he remembered to have ſeen them look as if they were very well acquainted with each other, when he beheld them at Ranelagh,

lagh, concluded that he ſhould, by marrying Miſs Hyde, be only a *convenient* huſband; and, therefore, reſolved to have no more to ſay to her.

His ſtay was momentary.

"I have changed my mind, Sir."

Having uttered this laconic ſpeech to Mr. Hyde, with great coolneſs, he quitted the room abruptly.

Mr. Hyde was too much ſurpriſed at the dry, deciſive behaviour of Mr. Bond, to anſwer him;—but when he was gone, he fell into a violent paſſion, raving againſt Myra, which laſted above a quarter of an hour without intermiſſion. Finding himſelf then too much fatigued, to proceed in the iraſcible ſtrain, he retired to his chamber, went to bed, and ordered *her* to attend him.

Myra, with a heart almoſt burſting with ſorrow, left her former rejection

jection of Mr. Bond's propoſals, added to her late behaviour, ſhould have fretted her father into a fit of ſickneſs, ſtrove moſt ſubmiſſively, moſt affectionately, by every method in her power, to alleviate his anxiety, and to ſoften him in her favour.

While ſhe was thus dutifully attending on her ſick father, Wilks, not knowing that ſhe had left Mrs. Bodely's, called to ſee her, expecting to find her ſtill riper for his ſchemes, as ſhe had made no verbal objection to it at his laſt viſit.

Wyndham too, feeling himſelf unable to reliſh his exiſtence without the ſight of her, reſolved to make another effort to enjoy the wiſhed-for ſatisfaction.

They both met at the door; and both,

both, narrowly ſurveying each other, aſked for Miſs Hyde.

Mrs. Bodely told them, that ſhe was gone to her father.

"Her father!" cried Jack.—— "What! is the girl then abſolutely "determined, at laſt, to ſell herſelf "to the devil? Faith, it is a thou- "ſand pities, that ſhe ſhould throw "herſelf away upon an old fellow, "when there is a young one juſt "ready to receive her, and only for "the ſake of a little more dirty caſh. "Of what uſe, in the name of for- "tune, is money, but to buy plea- "ſure? and what woman ever "found pleaſure with an old wither- "ed raſcal? *He* muſt be a curſed "old fool into the bargain, to ima- "gine that he can keep ſuch a girl "to himſelf.——I will lay my life, "ſhe never deſigns to be a conſtant

"turtle

" turtle to him.——No,—no.——
" my little Myra knows better.——
" Liberty is the word:—that is the
" only paſſion for her;—and a glo-
" rious one it is, by H——n!"

While Jack was running on in this manner, Wyndham's colour roſe, his blood began to boil; and he was more than half tempted to aſk him, what he meant by ſpeaking ſo lightly about a woman of reputation, who was now under her father's protection; but he was immediately checked by conſidering, that though men of a licentious turn certainly take ſcandalous liberties with the characters of very deſerving women, Miſs Hyde's behaviour had too much juſtified Mrs. Liſter's account of her. The admiſſion of Wilks's viſits, the confuſion which appeared in her countenance when he ſurpriſed them together,

together, and the entire ſuppreſſion of his name in her firſt narrative relating to herſelf, all concurred to fill him with ſuſpicions, and all combined to induce him to think, that Jack might not, poſſibly, have deviated from the truth in what he had advanced about her, notwithſtanding the freedom of his aſſertions.——With that freedom, indeed, Wyndham was very much ſhocked; becauſe every man of honour ought, in his opinion, to treat a woman with delicacy and good manners, whoſe reputation was only diſputable, who was not abſolutely in a ſtate of delinquency from virtue.

On further reflection, he thought he had no buſineſs to quarrel with his rival about a girl who, though he wiſhed to find her innocent, had not con-

conducted herſelf, according to *his* ideas of diſcretion, in an irreproachable manner.

Wyndham, from his firſt interview with Miſs Hyde, had looked upon her as a fine young creature, who might be conducive to his happineſs; but had he been really certain of that virtue which he, unjuſtly, ſuſpected, he could not have entertained any hopes of marrying her during the life of his father, who had often declared that he would, with the utmoſt ſeverity, puniſh any child who ſhould dare to diſoblige him in the important article of matrimony.——Theſe conſiderations, added to thoſe already mentioned, greatly tended to moderate his reſentment, and to keep it within bounds.

He

He was, therefore, ſilent, though by no means ſatisfied with Wilks's behaviour; and ſo diſſatisfied alſo with Myra's, that he almoſt came to a reſolution not to beſtow another thought upon her.

They both left Mrs. Bodely at the ſame time, but went different ways.

Wyndham, recollecting the lovelineſs of her figure, the ſpeaking ſenſibility in her eyes, and the modeſty of her whole appearance, was carried by an irreſiſtible impulſe to Mr. Hyde's.

The ſervant, in anſwer to his enquiries after her, told him, that ſhe ſaw nobody, becauſe his maſter was ſo bad; "not even Mr. Bond," added he, of his own accord, having heard his maſter declare, that ſhe never ſhould come home, till ſhe had agreed to receive Bond as a lover.

This

This reply, joined to Wilks's mention of Myra, and the great improbability of his ever getting her upon the only terms he could offer, as he naturally concluded that her acceptance of Bond's propoſals was merely to facilitate her affair with Jack, extremely chagrined him; and he departed leſs contented than he had ever been in his life, heartily wiſhing that he could totally forget her.

While *he* was endeavouring to efface the impreſſion which ſhe had made upon his heart, *ſhe* was cloſely attending her ſick father, who grew, hourly, worſe and worſe; and, after about a fortnight's confinement to his bed, died, leaving his daughter no more than twelve hundred pounds, the ſums ariſing from the

ſale

ſale of the furniture, &c. &c. included.

Wilks, to whom Myra had conſtantly denied herſelf, during her father's illneſs, appeared with his uſual eaſy, aſſured air, among thoſe who came to pay her the compliments of condolance.

He was received with great coolneſs; but as he had no idea of being diſguſted at any kind of reſerve in a fine woman, he behaved exactly in his old ſtyle, juſt as he behaved to her before ſhe left her father's houſe: conjecturing, that it did not ſignify a ſtraw whether ſhe married Bond, or any other man, as he was certain of being agreeable to her; and firmly believed, that the generous principles of Liberty, which he had infuſed into her *mind*, would prevent her from ſubmitting to any embargo

upon her *perſon*. Thinking, however, that ſhe might, poſſibly, not chuſe to make a full diſcovery of thoſe principles before company, he took an early opportunity to call upon her, when there was no ſmall probability of her being by herſelf.

He made a right calculation of the time, and was admitted.

Myra, well knowing that ſhe could not keep the houſe ſhe was in, nor indeed any other houſe with her fortune, as the intereſt ariſing from it would not even pay for her board and cloaths, had been conſidering by what means ſhe ſhould ſupport, with tolerable ſpirit, the appearance of a gentlewoman with it. After much rumination, ſhe thought that ſhe ſhould take the moſt prudent ſtep, by offering herſelf as a companion to a lady of character and fortune.——

Pride,

Pride, at firſt, made ſome reſiſtance, as a *companion* had always appeared to her rather in a contemptible light; but pride ſoon yielded to diſcretion, and ſhe reſolved to perform *that part* in the *drama of life* with the beſt grace in her power: not without flattering herſelf with hopes that ſhe might, by mixing more immediately among people of faſhion, attract the notice of a man, equally worthy of her attention, in a lucrative ſenſe, with Bond, of whom ſhe would gladly have accepted, on being left in ſo ſmall a way, in ſpite of all her prepoſſeſſion in favour of Wyndham, at whoſe long abſence ſhe began, indeed, to be ſomewhat ſurpriſed,—not to ſay concerned.

In this train of thinking, and with theſe reſolutions, Wilks found her. She had intended to diſcontinue her

acquaintance with him, which could not, indeed, be diſcreetly kept up in her new ſtyle of life; but ſhe ſaw not the neceſſity of quarrelling with him, if he did not renew the ſubject which had given her before ſo much offence.

To prevent the repetition of his viſits, ſhe told him, that ſhe ſhould ſoon leave her houſe.

"What! for old Bond's?" ſaid he.

"No, indeed!—for that of the "firſt agreeable friend, who likes "my company well enough to give "me my board."

"Well ſaid," replied he; "but "yet, my dear girl, there is ſome-"thing ſo diametrically oppoſite to "independence, in the bare idea of "one woman's being ſupported by "a ſlaviſh ſubmiſſion to the hu-

"mours

" mours of another, that you had
" better, I think, put yourſelf un-
" der the protection of ſome of us
" honeſt fellows, who ſhall conſider
" ourſelves amply repaid for our ci-
" vilities, by your condeſcending to
" accept of them: you will, by ſo
" doing, be furniſhed with every
" thing agreeably to your wiſhes,
" and at the ſame time enjoy that
" invaluable bleſſing, Liberty, with-
" out which, life is a very poor af-
" fair."

Myra, whoſe eyes had been for ſome time opened with regard to her preſent viſiter's principles, and who had only reſtrained herſelf from ſhewing her diſapprobation of them, till ſhe found a proper opportunity, now told him at once, that as their opinions were ſo extremely different, a farther acquaintance between them

could be attended with no ſatisfaction on either ſide; and that, as ſhe was on the point of quitting her houſe, ſhe wiſhed they might be ſtrangers to each other for the future.

Wilks, ſurpriſed at the abruptneſs of this unexpected reply, fain would have argued the matter with her, aſſuring her, that if ſhe differed from him in her ſentiments, it was merely for want of being better acquainted with the world; and that by adhering to thoſe narrow notions in favour of a dependent ſtate, ſhe would certainly draw herſelf into a diſagreeable dilemma: adding, that we were all born free, and had, undoubtedly, a right to be ſo; but that, if people choſe to give up their liberty for nothing, they muſt take what followed.

A tap

A rap at the door, prognoſticating the entrance of another viſiter, made Jack, who had already received his final diſmiſſion, take up his hat in a hurry.

Not a creature appeared in conſequence of the rap. Jack, however, thought proper to take his leave of Myra; but not without re-aſſuring her, that ſhe would ſeverely repent of what ſhe was about, and that he ſhould ſtill be ready to aſſiſt her, if ſhe would employ him in her ſervice.

Myra, very well pleaſed, at that time, with his departure, ſat a few minutes, expecting to ſee the perſon who had knocked at the door, come into the parlour.

Finding herſelf diſappointed, ſhe touched the bell, and, upon enquiry,

heard that Mr. Wyndham had made his appearance.

Wyndham, not having been able to conquer his deſire to ſee her, came to make her a viſit; but on being informed, when he aſked if ſhe was alone, that nobody but Mr. Wilks was with her, he concluded, that as Wilks was ſtill the favoured lover, he would, probably, continue to be ſo, and that any endeavours on his ſide to ſupplant him, would be, conſequently, fruitleſs; and, therefore, went away immediately, intending never to return.

He was, in a ſhort time, more confirmed in that reſolution, from a converſation which he had with his father.

Mrs. Liſter was not one of thoſe females, who love and hate with lukewarmneſs and diſcretion. When ſhe

ſhe had once taken a fancy to people, ſhe could never have enough of their company; but when, upon any ſudden change, ſhe grew diſguſted with them, ſhe not only broke off all acquaintance with them, but ſtrove alſo to render them odious to the whole world.——Myra's conduct, according to the light in which *ſhe* viewed it, had given her ſo much offence, that ſhe wrote a long and circumſtantial account of it to Colonel Wyndham; letting him know, that her intelligence was only to put him upon his guard, as his ſon, to her great concern, had met Myra at *her* houſe, in which, however, ſhe ſhould never be ſeen again, and had appeared to be extremely charmed with her, as the girl had, indeed, a promiſing exterior.

After the peruſal of this letter, the Colonel told his ſon, that he muſt think no more of Myra Hyde for a wife, unleſs he choſe to be cut off with a ſhilling. "Nor, indeed," added he, "can I forgive your tak-
"ing her for a miſtreſs, as I have
"choſen a lady for you, to whom
"you can make no reaſonable
"objection; but ſhe will be enabled
"to make an unanſwerable objection
"to *you*, if you previouſly enter in-
"to any engagements of an illegal
"nature: for a man, who keeps a
"miſtreſs after marriage, affronts
"his wife in a manner not eaſily to
"be pardoned."

Wyndham, who had himſelf obſerved ſomething very wrong in Myra's conduct, thought her by no means proper for his wife; yet, he could not ſo totally diveſt himſelf of the

the prejudices he had felt in her favour, as not to wiſh that both he and ſhe had been differently ſituated: not having yet ſeen a woman ſo captivating in *his* eyes before. As his reaſon, however, could not approve of the choice of his heart, he prudently reſolved to follow his father's injunctions, and, if poſſible, forget her.

While he was ſo determining, though his reſolutions were attended with many painful ſenſations, Myra, finding herſelf deſerted by him, applied to all thoſe ladies, alternately, Mrs. Liſter excepted, who had profeſſed a friendſhip for her while her father lived, intreating them to enquire among their friends for a lady, who wanted a young perſon, who had been genteely educated, to reſide with her as a companion.

They all expreſſed the greateſt ſurpriſe at her thinking of any thing ſo *mean*, ſo *out of the way*, ſo *vaſtly odd*. They could not have imagined, from her father's manner of living, and her appearance, but that ſhe would have had a very handſome fortune, or, at leaſt, a genteel ſufficiency, without becoming burdenſome to others.——Since ſhe was ſo circumſtanced, however, they would, as ſoon as they could recover from their prodigious ſurpriſe, enquire.——

"But there is really nothing upon "earth ſo hazardous, as a recom-"mendation of this kind;——peo-"ple in general are ſo hard to "pleaſe.——If the perſon ſhould "not anſwer in every reſpect the "character we have given, we ſhall "be cenſured as deficient in judg-"ment, ſuſpected of partiality, or

"pro-

" pronounced to have been miſin-
" formed about the temper and ta-
" lents of her, of whom we had
" thought too favourably.—Things
" of this ſort frequently occaſion
" miſunderſtandings among the beſt
" people; and we have known ſe-
" veral friendſhips of a long ſtand-
" ing, broken off by the flattering
" characters of ſervants, who have
" not turned out agreeably to the
" expectations formed about them."

Myra, whoſe pride was conſider-ably hurt by the degrading treatment which ſhe received from thoſe, to whom ſhe applied for their aſſiſ-tance, thanked *her very good friends* ſeparately, for the inconveniences they had thought of putting them-ſelves to on *her* account, and told them, at the ſame time, that ſhe would give them no farther trouble,

as ſhe believed that ſhe ſhould meet with more ſucceſs in another way, which had occurred to her mind.

The coolneſs and ſteadineſs of her behaviour, immediately turned the tables in her favour.

It is an old, but not, therefore, a leſs juſt obſervation, that the world will help *you*, if you will help yourſelf; and Myra experienced the truth of it. All thoſe, who appeared ſo doubtful concerning their abilities to ſerve her, when ſhe ſeemed diſtreſſed for want of their aſſiſtance, imagined, from the dignity and compoſure with which ſhe declined their ſervices, that ſhe was, really, not ſo neceſſitated as ſhe looked to be; and, conſequently, became very deſirous of being uſeful to her the moment they apprehended ſhe could do without them. But feeling her reſent-

ment

ment riſe at them, for having ſo groſsly diſcovered their attachment to appearances, recollecting what Wilks had ſaid to her concerning a ſtate of dependence, with bitterneſs, and beginning to fear that *their* recommendations might do her more hurt than good, ſhe coolly told them, that ſhe had really changed her plan, and begged them to ſhift the converſation.

When this herd of unmeaning people had left her, the reflections on their altered behaviour to her, on the alteration in her circumſtances, added to thoſe occaſioned by Wyndham's deſertion, threw her into ſuch a fit of weeping, that ſhe could not, in a great while, compoſe herſelf. But, as ſoon as ſhe grew calm, ſhe determined, in order to avoid laying herſelf under obligations to

any

any body, to advertiſe for the place which would, ſhe fancied, be the moſt ſuitable to her taſte. She then diſpoſed of her furniture, &c. &c. took ready furniſhed lodgings, and removed to them, intending to occupy them till ſhe could hear of a more eligible ſituation.

Her female friends, however, after having been deſired not to interfere in affairs, induſtriouſly informed their intimates, and through them the whole town, that Myra Hyde's narrow income obliged her to put herſelf almoſt upon a footing with a common ſervant.——"We never "could have believed, that a girl "who had kept good company, "dreſſed well, and held up her head "ſo high, would ever have con-"deſcended to any thing ſo low.— "It muſt be, certainly, very mor-

"tifying

" tifying to a girl, who has been
" treated like a gentlewoman, to
" wait on others, inſtead of being
" waited on herſelf.——But we
" commend her for it. It is vaſtly
" better, than going upon the ſtage,
" or the town, as girls, in ſuch ſitu-
" ations, generally do.——For *our*
" parts, if we had met with ſuch a
" dreadful change in our affairs, we
" ſhould inevitably have ſunk under
" it.——But ſome people, indeed,
" have a prodigious deal of courage,
" and can face any thing.——Nay,
" we commend her for it; we only
" ſay, that *we* could never have
" ſupported ſuch a degradation."

With this ſort of language, the almoſt invariable language of modern friendſhip, was Myra mentioned from houſe to houſe, by a pack of tattling, falſe-hearted females,

who

who were of the greateſt diſſervice to her, by their impertinent pity, and occaſioned a thouſand enquiries into her conduct and ſituation, which might have eſcaped inſpection. Her departure from her father's houſe, was the only indiſcretion which could be, on the ſtricteſt ſcrutiny into her character, faſtened upon her; but that indiſcretion was now diſplayed in ſuch glaring colours, and created ſo many injurious ſuſpicions in the minds of thoſe, who would not have been diſpleaſed to have had a well-educated girl about them, that not a woman, who knew any thing concerning her, would admit her into her family: ſo that ſhe became almoſt deſpairing of ſucceſs.

Perceiving, with the greateſt anxiety, the intereſt ariſing from her little fortune daily decreaſe, ſhe began

gan to fear that ſhe ſhould break into her capital.

Under theſe apprehenſions, ſhe received a letter in anſwer to her advertiſement, deſiring her to come to a houſe near Burlington-ſtreet, between twelve and one the next day.

While we leave her to prepare, though with no ſmall terror upon her ſpirits, to ſubmit her perſon and behaviour to the examination of a ſtranger, we will return to Mr. Wilks.

Jack, for ſome time, continued the favourite of the lady, to whom he had been introduced with ſo much ſecrecy, and, notwithſtanding his violent attachment to Liberty, had very near as ſtrong a penchant to her perſon and her purſe. She, too, was not leſs ſatisfied with

him;

him; but the licentiouſneſs of her conduct roſe to ſuch a height, that it could no longer be concealed. She was ſhunned and ſlighted by thoſe of her acquaintance, who had, before her immoral connections, been moſt eager to viſit her; and ſoon found, that ſhe muſt either appear in public with women of very indifferent characters, or ſit at home by herſelf. To remove theſe mortifications, ſhe reſolved to avail herſelf of a thought, which darted into her mind. A return to her huſband, ſhe could not poſſibly think of, if ſhe had liked him ever ſo much, as he was not only thoroughly acquainted with all her indiſcretions, and guilty of too many himſelf, to facilitate a reconciliation. Her ſcheme, therefore, was to prevail on her huſband to ſue for a divorce;

vorce; imagining, that he would not be diſpleaſed with ſuch a ſcheme, as he would, by the accompliſhment of it, be at liberty to diſpoſe of himſelf agreeably to his own fancy; and that ſhe ſhould, by giving her hand to Wilks, when releaſed from her conjugal engagement, recover her character, and regain the good opinion of every body: having obſerved, that ſeveral women, whoſe lives had been notoriouſly flagitious, became quite new creatures, by marrying their aſſociates in adultery, and were received on a very reſpectable footing.

Eager to figure again with a character, cleared of all the impurities which obſtructed her appearance in the reputable world, ſhe made the above propoſal to her huſband.

Luckily,

Luckily, he, at that very juncture, having gained the heart of a very fine girl, who was at her own diſpoſal, and only ſighed at the thoughts of his being already married, fell moſt readily into her ſcheme, and made all the neceſſary preparations for a divorce, as the time for the tranſaction of ſuch *important* buſineſs approached.

The lady, having ſo far carried her point, had not the ſmalleſt doubt of accompliſhing the matrimonial part of her deſign with all imaginable eaſe. She, therefore, determined to mention it to her dear Jack, the firſt opportunity ſhe had.

Accordingly, when ſhe flew into his arms at their next meeting, ſhe ſaid, "Receive your wife, my dear "friend, for I ſhall ſoon be ſo."

"My

"My wife!" replied Wilks, ſtarting back, "what a word have you "conjured up? a bug-bear, a hob-"gobling, to fright me from your "embraces. Pr'ythee, child, let "us have no more of that dull non-"ſenſe."

"Nonſenſe! Mr. Wilks," cried ſhe, reddening, not a little offended at his behaviour. "You will, I "believe, find a great deal of "ſprightly ſenſe in the poſſeſſion of "ſo large a part of my fortune, as "muſt be neceſſarily allowed me, "when the divorce between Mr. "C—— and me is finiſhed, which "will facilitate my marriage with "you."

"With me!" ſaid Wilks, with a look of the moſt mortifying contempt, accompanied with a long whiſtle,—— "Wh——e——w,

" child, what in the devil's name do
" you ſee in me, to make you ſup-
" poſe, that I ſhould marry my
" w——e?

At the concluſion of this unexpected ſpeech, which contained ſuch a ſting in it, ſhe loſt all power over her paſſions, and flew into ſuch a rage, that it may be juſtly ſaid to have " beggared all deſcription."

Shocked at her plot againſt his Liberty, he endeavoured to bring her to herſelf, only by means which appeared rather irritating than mollifying; for he aſſured her, that however looſe and abandoned ſhe might imagine him to be in his principles, from the irregularity of his conduct, he had too juſt a ſenſe of honour, to marry the woman who had violated her marriage vows. " So dear to
" me is Liberty," continued he,
" that

" that precious gift of heaven, to
" my ſoul, that I would not marry
" a veſtal in purity, nor an empreſs
" in rank. And, can you poſſibly
" conceive that I ſhould deſcend ſo
" low, that I ſhould become ſo
" mean, ſo deſpicably abject, as to
" call *that* animal *wife*, who has ſo
" baſely diſhonoured her huſband's
" bed? No, Madam; let me periſh
" firſt!——You are a fine noble-
" ſpirited creature, in a *high form*;
" and I admired you, becauſe you
" freely enjoyed the careſſes of the
" man you loved, without being
" ſhackled by any laws, human or
" divine; but when I think of
" your wiſhing to enſlave that man,
" to fetter him for life, to marry
" him to a ſtrumpet,—— a ——!
" H——ns! my blood boils at ſuch
" a ſcandalous indignity!——No,

" Madam! I ſcorn to act ſo con-
" temptible a part. I have ſome-
" times, it is true, been hurried a-
" way by my rebellious paſſions be-
" yond the bounds of diſcretion,
" without having ſtrength enough to
" ſtop them in the midſt of their ca-
" reer: I have been prompted by
" the ardor of youth, and the vigour
" of health, to purſue pleaſures,
" which I afterwards remembered
" with penitence; and to be con-
" cerned in actions, which I ſin-
" cerely condemned on a retroſpect
" of them: but never can I, while
" my ſenſes are unimpaired, coolly
" and deliberately take poſſeſſion of
" another man's property, by mar-
" rying the woman who has com-
" mitted the greateſt of all crimes,
" that is, adultery, in order to pave
" the way for a ſanction to her lewd-
" neſs.

" neſs. Can I believe, that ſhe
" who has been falſe to her huſband,
" will ever be conſtant to me?——
" No man loves a fine woman better
" than myſelf; but the fineſt
" woman in the univerſe, loaded
" with infamy, with a battered per-
" ſon, and with bad principles, may
" as well think of making me an
" hermaphrodite, as of uniting me
" to her by indiſſoluble ties. Look
" out, therefore, child, for ſome-
" body more likely to be gulled;
" and if you muſt be abſurd enough
" to forge chains only to break
" them, try to get ſome fool or
" knave into your power, for the
" man muſt certainly be either one
" or the other, who ſells himſelf,
" body and ſoul, to the devil, for a
" miſerable ſubſiſtence on the ſettle-
" ment of a wife."

During this ſpeech, the perſon to whom it was addreſſed was prevented from interrupting him, by the ſwells of paſſion, which almoſt choaked her.—Finding herſelf able, however, at the concluſion of it to articulate her feelings, ſhe, after a volley of ſlighter complaints than could have been expected, thus proceeded:—— "And ſo, Sir, you "really admire my ſpirit, in chuſing "ſuch a villain as yourſelf, to over-"whelm me with the remembrance "of my liberality; though you, at "the ſame time, upbraid me for "having injured my huſband: as if "it were poſſible to ſuppoſe, that "the favours laviſhed on you, made "me leſs criminal, than thoſe "ſhared with any other perſon.— "But you have taught me, notwith-"ſtanding the monſtrous inſolence

"of

" of your behaviour, one thing never
" to be forgotten, that a miſtaken
" love of Liberty muſt degenerate
" into licentiouſneſs; and that your
" ridiculous, and at preſent moſt
" unſeaſonable paſſion for freedom,
" can neither be rational nor laud-
" able, as it prompts you to perſiſt
" in ruining your own fortune, and
" *my* reputation."

" Faith, Madam," replied Jack,
" I do not imagine, that either the
" firſt or the laſt will ever be much
" mended; for *my* finances will ne-
" ver, I believe, be in a flouriſhing
" condition, and *your* character, I
" apprehend, is like the complex-
" ion of a blackmoor, never to be
" whitened: and ſo I leave you, to
" make the moſt of it; and that you
" may leave *me* as free as you found
" me,—there—(toſſing a purſe into

" her lap) is part of my wages, the " reſt you have had out of me in " pleaſure."

Then, taking up his hat, he ſoon found his way out of a houſe, into which he never more deſigned to enter.

When Jack had thus ballanced accounts with his conſcience, he had a very ſmall ſum left; but as he had been, ſeveral times, ſucceſsful at play, he was not without hopes of recruiting his pockets.

Soon after the above ſpirited interview between Jack and his female friend, Myra, according to her appointment, waited on the lady near Burlington-ſtreet.

When ſhe came to the door, and informed the ſervant, who opened it, of her buſineſs, he deſired her to walk

walk in and ſit down in the parlour till his lady was ſtirring.

Myra was, at firſt, very much hurt on being obliged to appear in the light of a dependent, and extremely diſconcerted at having miſtaken the hour through inattention; —but on re-peruſing the letter which ſhe had received, and caſting her eyes on a little dial that ſtood over the chimney in an ornamented caſe, ſhe found herſelf rather later than the time fixed upon.——However, as ſhe was to wait, ſhe employed herſelf in examining the room and furniture; the former was light and ſpacious, the latter both rich and elegant.

When ſhe had fully ſatisfied her curioſity, and had re-ſeated herſelf by the fire, the door opened.

A tall well-made man came in, but ſeeing *her* riſe at his entrance, deſired that he might not diſturb her, and immediately went out of the room.

Soon afterwards the ſervant returned, to let her know that his lady was ready to ſee her.

She followed him into her dreſſing-room with a diffidence, which made her appear doubly graceful in the eyes of the perſon whom ſhe, at that moment, wiſhed to pleaſe.

Mrs. Catton,—the lady to whom ſhe was introduced,—was a very fine woman, about eight-and-twenty or thirty, with a majeſtic air, yet with manners ſo engaging, that Myra was greatly prepoſſeſſed in her favour, though ſhe was quite in an undreſs; for which ſhe made a polite apology, ſaying, that ſhe was not willing

to

to keep her waiting; and adding, that as ſhe had every thing to expect from *her* appearance, ſhe hoped they ſhould ſoon be no longer ſtrangers to each other, but always ready to meet in any dreſs, and in any ſituation.

Myra, pleaſed with the frankneſs and eaſe of her behaviour, as well as with the little compliments ſhe had paid to her, made the moſt obliging reply ſhe could think of.

The two ladies being equally ſatiſfied with each other, an agreement was ſoon ſtruck up between them. "Sit down, my dear Miſs Hyde," ſaid Mrs. Catton, "and take your "breakfaſt with me: I ſhall only "conſent to part with you, while "you give the neceſſary orders for "the removal of your things to my "houſe; we ſhall then, I hope, be "inſeparable companions."

Myra expreſſed, what ſhe really felt, great pleaſure at ſo obliging a reception; and, in a few hours, commodiouſly diſpoſed of her cloaths in a genteel apartment appropriated to her uſe.

Mrs. Catton was a married woman, gay, well-bred, and agreeable; and ſoon ingratiated herſelf with the unſuſpecting Myra, who, having no ill intentions, harboured no ſuſpicions againſt thoſe who fell in her way. She made all the enquiries ſhe could, however, in the ſhort time allowed her, about the lady with whom ſhe was going to live; but heard only, in general, that Mr. Catton was a man of fortune, that his wife was a very handſome woman, that they lived as ſuch people commonly do, kept a great deal of company, dreſſed, played,

and

and ſpared no expence for their pleaſures.

For two days, Myra was quite ſatisfied with her ſituation.

Towards the cloſe of the ſecond day, and not till then, Mr. Catton appeared, and behaved in the politeſt manner to her; and Mrs. Catton preſented ſeveral ornamental trifles to her, that ſhe might figure in a more advantageous light with her at the play the following evening, for which ſhe had ſecured places in one of the ſide-boxes.

Myra had juſt changed her mourning for her father, and extremely became the dreſs ſhe put on to accompany Mrs. Catton to the houſe.

They came to their ſeats a few moments after the drawing-up of the curtain.

The appearance of two fine women, naturally attracted every body's eyes. Myra, though not leſs ſenſible of admiration than her companion, was leſs flattered by the attention which her preſence occaſioned, than ever ſhe had been in her life; for there was a ſtaring freedom, cloſely bordering upon impudence, in the looks of the men, which ſhe had never obſerved before, in any place and upon any occaſion, and which almoſt put her out of countenance. Thoſe looks were attended with winks, nods, and fleers, all round the houſe, the meaning of which ſhe could not poſſibly comprehend:—they were beyond her comprehenſion; but they ſtrangely diſconcerted her.

Mrs. Catton paid no regard to the behaviour which ſhocked her new com-

companion ſo much, but talked and laughed almoſt as loudly as the players; by ſo doing, ſhe added conſiderably to Myra's diſtreſs: for Myra thought, that by ſo talking and ſo laughing, ſhe ſhewed an improper inattention to the entertainment of the evening; and was certain, that her behaviour drew the obſervation of the whole audience upon them. She, therefore, in order to remedy a grievance which began to be hardly ſupportable, affected not to liſten to Mrs. Catton, and tried to fix her attention upon what was paſſing on the ſtage.

Turning her head accidentally, while ſhe was ſo employed, on hearing a little noiſe behind her, who ſhould ſhe behold, leaning over the next box, with his eyes full on her, but Mr. Wyndham, whom ſhe had not

not ſeen from the time of her father's death.

A bluſh of ſurpriſe and conſcious terror crimſoned her fair face in a moment, while ſhe returned a very ſerious bow which he made her.

Before ſhe could recover herſelf, Mrs. Catton cried out in a voice loud enough to be heard by him, "My "dear Myra, who is that pretty "young fellow?"

Shocked at ſuch a queſtion, in ſo public a manner, and addreſſed to *her*, who had been the whole evening marked out for public obſervation, ſhe knew not what reply to make.——Calling, therefore, her fan to her aſſiſtance, ſhe whiſpered behind it, while it concealed her increaſing confuſion, "I will tell you "by and by."

When

When the play was over, Myra, very naturally imagining that Wyndham would take that opportunity to ſpeak to her, was very much ſurpriſed to find that he ſtill kept his ſeat; and even, when they went out of their box, made no effort to come after them.

More perplexed than ever at a behaviour ſo new and ſo unexpected, ſhe was following Mrs. Catton ſlowly along the paſſage, when Jack Wilks, and another young fellow, met them.

Jack, taking hold of the firſt-mentioned lady, and looking full in her face, cried, "Hold,—by gad I "am in the wrong box: I had like "to have made a ſeizure of the moſt "inveterate enemy to Liberty in the "three kingdoms.——No,—no,— "I have had enough of *her*:—but "what!

" what! my little Myra, have *you*
" been converted by a woman with
" ſuch diabolical principles?—Plea-
" ſure forbid.——But be it how it
" will, my dear, I will reſcue thee
" from ſuch a precious tyrant in
" petticoats."

Then, ſeizing Myra's hand, he was pulling her along with him,—when the rudeneſs of his attack, added to her ſurprize, and the complicated anxiety which ſhe had endured from the moment ſhe appeared in the ſide-box, overpowered her ſpirits, and ſhe fainted into Wyndham's arms, who had followed them cloſely, with a deſign only to make remarks; and, by ſo doing, ſaved her from falling.

Myra, however, continued but a very ſhort time in her fainting fit. Opening her eyes, ſeeing the crowd

and

and buſtle about her, and ſeeing Wilks ſtill apparently ready to carry her off, ſhe looked up, terrified, to Wyndham, for protection.—"Oh! "Sir," ſaid ſhe, in accents ſcarce intelligible, through ſhame, through fear, "ſave me, ſave me from thoſe "people"——(caſting the wildeſt glances at Wilks.)

Wyndham, animated by the return of all his former inclination for her, and urged by the tendereſt compaſſion, preſſed her cloſe to his boſom, by way of aſſuring her of his interpoſition in her favour, and replied, (tranſported at her having requeſted it) "I will not leave you, "but in a place of ſafety."

She then looked round for Mrs. Catton, who was ready to go to her coach, conducted by a ſtranger who had offered his aſſiſtance. The

ſtranger

ſtranger telling Wyndham, he muſt follow *that* lady, gave her his arm to reſt upon, as ſhe was hardly able to ſupport herſelf.

Wilks, who had ſtarted back at Wyndham's advancing with Myra, and whom all this buſtle had ſomewhat reſtored to his ſenſes cried, as ſhe paſſed, "O ho! it ſeems, then, "my little Myra is become part of "that chaſte gentlewoman's family, "that foe to freedom, who wants a "huſband for a ſlave! But let me "give you a piece of advice, my "dear: get out of her reach as ſoon "as you can; for I am well aſſured, "from woeful experience, that ſhe "will play the devil with you."

Poor Myra hung her head, bluſhing exceſſively at this treatment. Wyndham *looked*, what he did not chuſe to *ſay*, to Wilks, for ſeveral rea-

reaſons; at laſt he got her to the coach, lifted her in, and, in conſequence of an invitation from Mrs. Catton, placed himſelf by her ſide.

Myra ſoon recovered herſelf, juſt enough to thank him for his care of her, and then remained ſilent the reſt of the way; and the owner of the carriage ſtrove to entertain him by a multitude of lively ſpeeches, and not injudicious remarks on the performance and the company.

When they ſtopped at her houſe, he aſſiſted them both in getting out of the coach; but ſeeing Myra ſtill pale, trembling, and dejected, refuſed to ſtep in and take a bit of ſupper, though earneſtly preſſed by her female friend.

On taking leave, however, he begged her permiſſion to enquire after Miſs Hyde's health in the morning.

ing. His requeſt being willingly and chearfully granted by Mrs. Catton, he left her and Myra, who ſmiled her approbation in the ſweeteſt manner, reſolving to find out, as ſoon as poſſible, how the latter came to be ſo dangerouſly ſituated with the former.

When the two ladies were by themſelves, Mrs. Catton made uſe of ſuch warm expreſſions in praiſe of Wyndham, and diſcovered ſo ſtrong a deſire to improve her acquaintance with him, that Myra's eyes began to be opened, and ſhe fancied ſhe ſaw ſomething very wrong in that lady's conduct; but as ſhe had, at that time, no ſpirits to enter into a converſation of ſo intereſting a nature, and, beſides, wanted to aſk Wyndham a few previous queſtions, ſhe put a ſtop to her encomiums, by declaring, that

ſhe

ſhe had not recovered from her fright, and intreating her permiſſion to retire.

Mrs. Catton, after having called her a poor, fearful, low-ſpirited creature, ſuffered her to leave her.

Myra could not cloſe her eyes all night, ſo much, ſo deeply did ſhe think on what had paſſed; nor did ever any body long more for the ſucceſs of a favourite deſign, than ſhe for the return of day, and Wyndham. She was, chiefly, afraid that ſhe ſhould not be able to ſpeak to him alone; as it was very plain, that her friend was too well pleaſed with him, not to inſiſt upon having *her* ſhare of his converſation.

Fortune, however, proved her friend, contrary to her expectations.

Wyndham, having the ſame apprehenſions, came ſooner than people

ple uſually do to make a morning viſit. Mrs. Catton, therefore, who was never in a hurry to quit her pillow, and who had no idea of ſo well-bred a man's imagining he ſhould find her at ſo early an hour, did not wake till ſome time after he had been introduced to the parlour.

Myra received him with an emotion, which it was not in her power to conceal.

When the firſt enquiries after her health were over, ſhe, believing that ſhe had not a ſingle moment to loſe, after having again thanked him for the protection which he had afforded her, begged him, with the greateſt earneſtneſs, to tell her what he thought of the lady of the houſe, and to inform her, if he knew any thing about her character.

The

The honeſt frankneſs of this intreaty, and the eagerneſs with which ſhe delivered it, inſtantly diſperſed a crowd of doubtful ideas concerning Myra's reputation, which had, from his firſt meeting with her, rolled in his mind.

With a ſatisfaction, therefore, in his countenance, which ſhe had never yet beheld, he cried, "Is it poſ-
"ſible that Miſs Hyde can have
"been in the houſe with Mrs. Cat-
"ton, and have appeared with her
"in public, and not know that ſhe is
"a lady with whom few, if any of her
"own ſex will aſſociate, with whom
"none, who have any regard for
"reputation, will appear?——It is
"believed, that ſhe will ſoon be di-
"vorced from her huſband, as an
"affair has been diſcovered between
"*her* and Mr. Wilks, who, licen-

" tious as he is in his own carriage,
" juſtly deſpiſes the lady for the in-
" diſcreetneſs, not to uſe a harſher
" word, of *hers*; as vice muſt ever
" be doubly odious in the fair ſex,
" who are never truly beautiful, if
" they are not virtuous."

" Gracious H——n!" ſaid Myra, ready to faint a ſecond time, " Is it,
" indeed, poſſible? have I fallen in-
" to *ſuch* hands?—But indeed, in-
" deed, Sir," continued ſhe, burſting into tears, " I am not, inten-
" tionally, guilty of any fault,
" though I have, I fancy, appeared
" to you in a criminal light ever
" ſince our firſt meeting at Mrs. Liſ-
" ter's: my conduct, however, has
" been miſrepreſented to you;—yet
" I will not deny, but that my de-
" ſire of avoiding a marriage, which
" I never could think of without diſ-

" guſt,

" guſt, added to my ignorance of
" the world, from which I have
" brought upon myſelf ſo much ca-
" lumny, threw me into ſituations
" which, though really innocent,
" appeared highly criminal in the
" eyes of thoſe, better acquainted
" with the world than I am.—But
" I am very ready to acknowledge
" my errors; and if you can have
" patience to liſten to me, I will re-
" late all that has happened to me
" ſince my firſt wrong ſtep,—my
" departure from my father.——A
" ſtep to which Mr. Wilks excited
" me.——A ſtep for which I ſhall
" ever condemn myſelf; as I ſhall,
" I fear, have reaſon to repent of it
" as long as I live."

She then very accurately acquainted Mr. Wyndham with every thing that had paſſed, her ſenſations

with regard to himſelf only excepted, which ſhe very prudently ſuppreſſed.

Wyndham liſtened with the utmoſt attention to her intereſting and affecting narrative, and was charmed with it; but at the concluſion of it, found himſelf with a heart more full of her than ever, ſtill leſs encouraged to hope for happineſs with her in the way he wiſhed for. It was now impoſſible to think of her in an honourable light; and her character could not, in his opinion, be retrieved, but by the ſtricteſt attention to propriety in her conduct in a new ſituation, if it was not irretrievable. However, as there was no room to ſuppoſe, from the frankneſs of her confeſſion, that her chaſtity, though naturally ſuſpected, had been actually violated, he admired her for her

her openneſs concerning the behaviour of Wilks, and for the concern which ſhe diſcovered for having liſtened to his miſtaken and deſtructive notions of Liberty, to which ſhe juſtly and fairly attributed her firſt deviations from filial obedience, and all her ſubſequent troubles and diſtreſſes: he admired her for her ingenuouſneſs; and finding that ſhe really never had the leaſt intention to bring a ſtain upon a character, which, before her acquaintance with Wilks, had not received the ſlighteſt blemiſh, pity and love, ſtrengthened by each other, made him earneſtly urge her removal from the houſe ſhe was in. Eagerly prompted alſo by the above-mentioned tender paſſions, to exert himſelf in the recovery of her reputation, as he felt that he was deeply intereſted in it,

he aſked her, if ſhe had any objection to retirement in the country; imagining, he told her, that abſence and time might efface all injurious impreſſions, which her imprudent connections, though ſhe was not ſenſible of their being ſo, had occaſioned againſt her.

In reply ſhe ſaid, that ſhe had but one objection to his kind propoſal: "I am totally unacquainted with "any perſon at a diſtance from "London; and, as I have been ſo "cruelly deceived, whom, Sir, can I "truſt?"

"It would be the greateſt pre-"ſumption in me, Madam," anſwered Wyndham, "to affirm, that "you may ſafely rely on me; yet I "ſwear ſolemnly, that no perſon "upon earth is more ſincerely your "friend, nor more ardently wiſhes

"to

" to reſtore you to reputation and " happineſs, than I do."

" Oh! Sir," replied ſhe, in an agony of tears, " do not, then, any " longer delay putting me into ſome " method to extricate myſelf from " the difficulties in which I have " been, through my folly and my " ignorance, involved."

" You muſt weep no longer," ſaid he, tenderly, " I cannot bear " theſe affecting tears.——Believe " me, Miſs Hyde, I will take the " ſureſt and ſpeedieſt meaſures to " deliver you from your diſagreeable " ſituation. Be compoſed, there- " fore, and depend upon me."

A ſervant here interrupted them, to let them know, that his lady expected them to breakfaſt in her dreſſing-room.

When he was gone, Myra ſaid, "What muſt we do, Sir?"

"I would adviſe you, by all "means," replied he, "to go to "her, and to take the firſt oppor- "tunity of leaving her, but in a ci- "vil manner: people of *her* caſt are "but too eaſily provoked to be miſ- "chievous; and the evidence of *one* "perſon againſt you, will do you a "real injury, which twenty wit- "neſſes in your favour may not be "able to remove.—As to me, not "being acquainted, and never in- "tending to be acquainted with "her, I am not in the leaſt obliged "to comply with her invitation.— "You may tell her, that I juſt call- "ed to know how you did after your "fright, but that I was engaged to "breakfaſt in another place.—— "However, before I go, let me in-

"form

" form you, that I have thought of " a family that will be ſuitable to " you.——When you have quitted " *this* houſe, I will call on you at " your lodgings, and ſettle every " thing."

Myra, whoſe heart bounded with gratitude, and with a ſofter paſſion, thanked him, not only with her tongue but with her eyes; declaring, at the ſame time, with the moſt melting ſenſibility, all her feelings.

He loved her extremely, and he was charmed with the marks of her confidence and eſteem; but he knew not yet what to believe.—He ſtill,—ſtill thought, that a farther trial was neceſſary to fix the character of a woman, whom he wiſhed to reſpect as much as he loved her; and whom he might, at a proper time, introduce to his family without a bluſh.

Before he left her, Myra told him, that ſhe would, if he thought proper, return to the lodgings ſhe had quitted, in order to come to Mrs. Catton's, as the people of the houſe had been witneſſes to the regularity of her conduct; and, upon her giving him an account of them, he told her, that ſhe could not, in his opinion, do better; adding, that he would wait on her in her old apartments.

When Myra entered Mrs. Catton's dreſſing-room, ſhe found her in the moſt elegant diſhabille to be imagined.

At ſeeing her alone, ſhe uttered an exclamation,—— "What have you "done with that ſweet fellow?"

Myra told her,——(agreeably to his deſire) that he had a prior engagement upon his hands:—— "He "only

" only called juſt to aſk me how I " did, Madam.——He left his com- " pliments to *you*."

" He had better have delivered " them himſelf," ſaid ſhe, peev- iſhly.

Myra made little or no anſwer to what ſhe ſaid relating to Wyndham, notwithſtanding her violent curioſity on *his* account, endeavouring to be as ſilent about him as ſhe could.

As ſoon as ſhe could find a proper opportunity, ſhe told Mrs. Catton, that ſhe muſt leave her before the end of the day, having entered too haſtily into a way of life, which would not at all, on reflection, ſuit her.

Mrs. Catton expreſſed the greateſt aſtoniſhment and diſpleaſure at this proceeding, and directly ſaid, " I

" ſuppoſe you are going to live with
" Wyndham."

Myra coloured exceſſively at ſo injurious an inſinuation; but though ſhe declared her ſuſpicion to be an unjuſt one, Mrs. Catton peeviſhly told her, that her face contradicted her words: and, finding that ſhe was determined to leave her, added, " I " ſhall not court you to ſtay, child, " for I know it will be in vain; " when once a girl's head is running " upon a young fellow, there is no " perſuading her to any thing."

Myra, conſcious of her own innocence, diſdained to make any reply.

In about an hour ſhe returned, with her boxes, in a hackney coach, to her old lodgings.

On her arrival, to take re-poſſeſſion of them, ſhe was informed, that a gentleman had been to enquire af-

ter

ter her; and that, hearing ſhe was not come, he ſaid he would call in the afternoon.

He did ſo, according to his promiſe.

She received him with a great deal of ſatisfaction, which gave him infinite pleaſure.

When ſhe had told him in what manner Mrs. Catton and ſhe had parted, he replied, "I have been "thinking, ever ſince I left you, "how to execute a ſcheme which I "have formed for your future hap-"pineſs: I hope, at leaſt, that your "happineſs will be promoted by it. "I am acquainted with a lady, with "an unexceptionable character, who "is lately, by the loſs of one of the "moſt indulgent of huſbands, be-"come averſe to a crowd of com-"pany, and chuſes rather to reſide

" upon her own eſtate in Berkſhire,
" than to lead a diſſipated life in
" town, as her acquaintance are nu-
" merous, and her connections ex-
" tenſive. She will, I dare venture
" to aſſure you, be happy in having
" ſo amiable a friend as yourſelf,
" Miſs Hyde, always about her;
" and if you can be pleaſed with her
" and her way of life, you will, I
" think, be very agreeably ſituated;
" at leaſt, till you can be fixed in a
" more eligible ſituation.——A pro-
" per introduction will be the only
" difficult part of the affair.——A
" recommendation from a young
" fellow, is ſeldom to a lady's ad-
" vantage.——I was, it is true, inti-
" mate with Mr. Melmoth; but
" whether his widow has the ſame
" eſteem for me as he had, I cannot
" pretend to ſay: though I am ſure

" I have

" I have done nothing to forfeit her
" good opinion.——But you will,
" by your own engaging perſon and
" behaviour, together with the re-
" gularity of your conduct, ſuffi-
" ciently recommend yourſelf. One
" of Mrs. Melmoth's tenants, a ſub-
" ſtantial farmer, has a neat, con-
" venient houſe, adjoining to the
" bottom of her garden; in *his* houſe
" I had, myſelf, once an apartment
" in it to ſleep in, as my friend's
" houſe was full of company before
" I came down.——In this manner I
" found out, that the farmer and
" his family were ſober, clean peo-
" ple, and much ſuperior to the ge-
" nerality of perſons in *their* ſphere
" of life.——With them, I fancy,
" you may board for a little while;
" by ſo doing, you will neceſſarily
" be known to Mrs. Melmoth;

" yo

"your own good underſtanding,
"and amiable carriage, will do the
"reſt."

Myra, almoſt as much tranſported with joy as ſhe had been before diſpirited by diſtreſs, could hardly find words adequate to the grateful ſenſations which ſhe felt. She aſſured him, however, that whether Mrs. Melmoth condeſcended to take notice of her or not, ſhe ſhould be far happier with the honeſt farmer, than in any place in London, and deſired to go down as ſoon as poſſible.

Wyndham, charmed to perceive, that ſhe readily fell in with his deſigns for her advantage, as ſhe, by ſo chearful a compliance, gave him the ſtrongeſt proof of her innocence, and of the integrity of her heart, told her, that he would firſt write to

Mr.

Mr. Wheatly, to ſecure an apartment for her, as for a lady whom he had been deſired to recommend to a neat, regular family, with whom ſhe might board and be properly attended; and, then, rather haſten than retard her removal from London.

Myra entirely aſſented to every thing he propoſed; and he, after a viſit of a decent length, took his leave. They parted, very well ſatisfied with each other.

Myra, however, at ſome moments, felt a few doubts concerning the propriety of the ſtep ſhe was going to take.

"Mr. Wyndham is almoſt a "ſtranger to me, though we have "often met.——Such diſintereſted "friendſhip, in ſo young a man, is "not common.—I may, with rea-"ſon, diſtruſt the appearance of it.

"—But

" —But he is going to ſend me to a
" great diſtance from him;—true.—
" Yet do the people really deſerve
" his encomiums upon them?——
" May I not run a riſque of falling a
" ſecond time into bad hands?——
" But there is a charming openneſs
" in his countenance; an honeſt
" frankneſs in his behaviour, which
" leaves me no room to queſtion his
" ſincerity.——And, ſuppoſing he
" *has* any ill deſigns, might they not
" have been better carried on while
" I was with a woman who, appa-
" rently, would rather have forward-
" ed a diſhonourable affair, than
" have prevented the execution of
" it?——Beſides, I know not whom
" to truſt.——I have no friends, no
" relations left!——Thoſe about
" me, who called themſelves my
" friends, have behaved in a manner

" not

" not to gain my approbation; and,
" ſince I have been in public with
" Mrs. Catton, they will all, un-
" doubtedly, deſert me, were I to
" apply to them. I firmly believe,
" therefore, with Mr. Wyndham,
" that my reputation will be, prob-
" ably, reſtored at a diſtance from
" London, where I ſhall not be at
" all known.——I, therefore, re-
" poſe a confidence in *him*; but I
" ſhall keep a ſtrict guard over my-
" ſelf, and proceed with the utmoſt
" caution and circumſpection."——
Such were her reflections.

During the interval between his writing to Mr. Wheatly and his receiving an anſwer to his letter, he ſaw Myra two or three times; and, as he treated her with the greateſt reſpect, never letting any thing drop from his lips which could make the

ſlighteſt

ſlighteſt diſcovery of his paſſion for her, never appearing but as a diſintereſted friend, ſhe grew more and more willing to purſue the plan he had digeſted for her.

The anſwer from Mr. Wheatly was perfectly ſatisfactory.

He gave it her to read; and the peruſal of it brought tears of pleaſure into her eyes.

The next thing to be conſidered, was how ſhe ſhould get down.—— *She* propoſed the *ſtage*, as the ſafeſt and leaſt expenſive conveyance; but *he* objected to it, as ſhe might be expoſed to impertinence, if not inſolence.

"Do not you think the woman, "with whom you lodge at preſent, "would go down with you in a "poſt-chaiſe, if ſhe was properly "conſidered for her time?"

Myra

Myra did not chuſe to lay herſelf under any more obligations to him, neither was ſhe willing to be at ſo extraordinary expence herſelf. She, therefore, replied:

" If Mrs. Brown *can* be prevailed " upon to accompany me, I prefer " the *ſtage*. Two women in a poſt- " chaiſe are, I think, more liable to " danger, than when in company; " and, I hope, there is a chance for " our meeting with *ſome* people of " character among the paſſengers."

Wyndham, who gueſſed her motives, ſaid:

" You muſt pardon me, if I at- " tempt to remove every difficulty " which prevents you from acting " agreeably to your *real* choice, by " intreating you to accept,——if " only for the preſent,——a ſum " ſufficient for your travelling ex-

" pences;

" pences; for, as I have occaſioned
" your journey, I ought, in juſtice,
" to defray the charges of it."

He then put a bank note of twenty pounds into her hand, but he could not, by any perſuaſions, induce her to take it.

" I ſhall always, Sir," ſaid ſhe, " think myſelf very conſiderably " obliged to you, for having ſo gene- " rouſly thrown me into a way to re- " trieve my reputation, and to ſe- " cure it againſt the poiſonous " breath of ſcandal; and my endea- " vours to make myſelf worthy of " Mrs. Melmoth's notice, in whoſe " favour you have ſpoken ſo highly, " and whom I ſo extremely wiſh to " pleaſe, will be my beſt acknow- " ledgments for your uncommon " friendſhip, equally pure and di- " intereſted."

" I fear-

"I feared," replied he, with a look full of diſappointment, "that I "ſhould wound the delicacy which "I ſo much admire; but, believe "me, Miſs Hyde, by refuſing my "aſſiſtance, after having owned "yourſelf convinced of the ſincerity "of my friendſhip, you diſcover a "want of confidence in me, which, "as I am conſcious of the goodneſs "of my intentions, pains me inex-"preſſibly.——Hoping, however, "that you will, when you know me "better, be inclined to truſt me "more; and looking upon this very "refuſal as a ſingular proof of your "diſcretion, I ſubmit, on condition "that you will freely give me notice "whenever you think I can be real-"ly ſerviceable to you."

Myra bowed, and bluſhed her thanks.

The

The next day, having prevailed on Mrs. Brown to go with her, when she had offered to pay all expences, she left London, and arrived safe at Mr. Wheatly's.

She was received at the honest farmer's with an unceremonious civility; but the heartiness of the reception made ample amends for every deficiency in the politeness of it.

At night she retired to rest, with a tranquility which she had not enjoyed for some time, though at a great distance from the man whom she loved for his noble behaviour to her.

On Mrs. Brown's return to London, Wyndham made particular enquiries after her fellow-traveller, and opened a correspondence with Mr. Wheatly, desiring him to communicate all the occurrences in his family,

family, that he might have an opportunity of hearing how Myra conducted herſelf, not chuſing either to write to her himſelf, or ſolicit, through Wheatly, for an epiſtolary intercourſe with her juſt at that juncture.

It is now time to return to Wilks.

Jack, having thrown himſelf out of Mrs Catton's good graces, ſoon found his purſe in a galloping conſumption, and was not a little chagrined at the reduction of his caſh; but, ſcorning to purchaſe even the neceſſaries of life at the expence of his Liberty, he very philoſophically carried the laſt fifty pieces he had in his poſſeſſion to the gaming-table.

Fortune being in a humour to favour him, he quickly ſwept away *five hundred.*

Returning to his lodgings with that ſum, between twelve and one, he ſaw, as he paſſed the door of a large houſe near Covent-garden, a female ſtanding, with a ſmall band-box in her hand.

She made a whimpering kind of noiſe, which immediately attracted his attention.

"What is the matter, child?" ſaid he, with a good-humoured tone, the more ſo, perhaps, as he had been a ſucceſsful adventurer; for, as honeſt Humphrey ſays, a man is quite another thing with money in his pocket.

"Oh! Sir," replied the girl, turning her face towards him, which was not, he could ſee by the light reflected from a lamp over her head, an ugly one, "I am frighted out of "my wits; for all our family is

"gone

" gone to bed, and I do not know " how I ſhall get in."

" And who is our family?" ſaid Jack, " and what do you do, my " pretty girl, on the outſide of the " door at this time of night?"—— With theſe words, he ſeized her by the ſhoulder.

" Oh! la, Sir, pray let me alone; " for if my Miſtreſs, or any of our " Miſſes, was to ſee me with a man, " I ſhould be undone for ever."

" And who is your Miſtreſs, my " dear?" ſaid Wilks, putting his hand under her chin.

" Pray be quiet, Sir, and leave " me to get in how I can; for I am " terribly afraid ſhe will beat me."

" Beat you!—What right has ſhe " to beat you?"

" La," cried the girl, with a fleering caſt of her eyes, " how you

" talk!—but ſuch fine Gentlemen
" as you, does not know how poor
" apprentice girls are uſed, when
" they ſtay ever ſo little a while
" longer of an errand."

" And ſo you are bound to be
" ſubſervient to all which the wo-
" man who calls herſelf your miſ-
" treſs, has a mind to impoſe upon
" you?——H—ns! that in a land
" of Liberty, human creatures
" ſhould be ſuffered to lord it thus
" over each other! But come, child,
" knock at the door, I will ſtand by
" you, and ſave you from a whip-
" ping, unleſs you had rather go
" with me till morning, and take
" one puniſhment for all."

" Go with *you*, Sir? Oh dear!
" ſure you do not know what you
" ſay! why, my Miſtreſs would
" mob me then, indeed."

" And

"And what ſignifies it whether "ſhe mobs you or not, my dear?"

"Oh! Lord! but then I ſhould "be quite ruined, as ſhe tells me, "if I mind what men ſays."

"And ſo you think, that this "miſtreſs of yours has a natural "right over you, not only with re- "gard to your time, but even over "your appetites and paſſions; and "that you are neither to ſee, or "hear, or be hungry, or dry, with- "out *her* leave."

"La! well! that's ſo comical," ſaid the girl, with a ſmile, which ſhewed how much ſhe was diverted with him; "for, to be ſure, as I "was going to carry home theſe "ruffles, I only juſt ſtept into the "play, and it happened to be the "*Country Girl*, which is vaſtly fun- "ny, you know, Sir; and I laugh-

" ed ſo, and was ſo hot with the
" crowd, and ſo dry, that I could
" not refuſe our Tom, who lives
" over the way there, and went in-
" to the gallery with me, to drink
" a glaſs of punch with him: and
" then he went with me to carry
" home my things, and to be ſure
" the maid called out of the garret
" window, and ſaid, that her maſ-
" ter and miſtreſs were gone to bed,
" and had got the key of the door
" up with them; and that I muſt
" come earlier another time, or
" bring them in the morning: and
" ſo, to be ſure, my miſtreſs will
" ſay, that I ſhould have gone when
" ſhe ſent me.——But if ſhe is ſuch
" a bad woman as you ſay, Sir, (in-
" deed ſhe won't let us ſtir out if
" ſhe can help it); why then I may as
" well go with you to-night, and

" to-

" to-morrow one lie will ſerve for
" all."

" Hold there, child," replied Wilks, " I bar all lying.——To lie
" is to be a hypocrite: no, no;—
" tell the honeſt truth boldly at
" once: ſay that you ſtaid out, be-
" cauſe you liked it better than ſtay-
" ing at home; and that if you did
" *her* buſineſs, ſhe ought to allow
" you a reaſonable time for plea-
" ſure."

" La, now," cried the girl, " as
" if I dare to ſay any ſuch thing.—
" Why, ſhe would break every bone
" about me. Indeed, Sir, you
" can't conceive, what a tyrant ſhe
" is."

" The devil take all tyrants," ſaid Wilks, " I am a lover of Li-
" berty."

"And I too," cried the girl;—"and if I knew what to do with my "things, I would e'en go along with "*you*, Sir: I never heard any man "talk ſo purely ſince I was born: "you are every inch a Gentleman, "that's a true thing; and, for my "part, I had rather live with a real "Gentleman in any way, than be a "wife to the beſt tradeſman in Eng-"land."

"Right, right," ſaid Wilks, taking her arm under his, "wives and "huſbands are ſlaves,—Liberty is "*my* motto;——ſo come along, "girl."

The fooliſh young creature, idle, fond of pleaſure, impatient of controul, and whetted into an entire abhorrence of all kinds of reſtraint, complying with his deſire, he carried her to his lodgings.

In

In the morning, inſtead of going home with the box, as ſhe had told him ſhe would, ſhe went to diſpoſe of its contents, and then, returning to him, with a whimpering face, ſaid, "My miſtreſs has uſed me ve-"ry cruelly; and as you have told "me, that ſhe has no right to do "ſo, being free-born as well as her-"ſelf, I have left her for good and "all, and will never go near her a-"gain."

"You are a fine-ſpirited girl," ſaid Jack.

For a few days he was mighty fond of her; but then, finding his pockets low, and his paſſion ſatiated, he informed her in plain terms, that he could keep her no longer; and that he expected her to ſet up for herſelf, as ſhe had learned her trade. —"If you remain with me another

" day, I ſhall fancy myſelf nooſed
" for life."

" Why that's true," ſaid Sally;
" I like you very well, to be ſure:
" but, when Tom came to dreſs my
" head this morning, I thought he
" looked almoſt as handſome; and,
" I am like you, I love Liberty, and
" won't be confined to one man."

" 'Sdeath! you little devil.—Do
" you pretend to put me upon a
" footing with a barber's boy?"

" Why not?——Let me die,——
" (as *you* ſay) if I ſee much dif-
" ference.——When you are with-
" out your gold waiſtcoat, and he
" throws off his powdered frock,
" there is not a pin to chuſe: and I
" am for Liberty of Choice as well
" as you."

" Aye; and for Freedom of
" Speech too.——But ſince you find

" no

" *no* difference between the *men*,
" you little jade, you ſhall find none
" in their pockets; and ſo march
" off."——

He then took her by the ſhoulders, and thruſt her out of the room.

She turned about to him, as ſhe ſtood upon the ſtairs, and, ſnapping her fingers, cried, " Give me Liber-
" ty even with a Barber's boy, rather
" than confinement with the beſt
" Gentleman in the land."

Jack, while his money laſted, thought of nothing but of enjoying himſelf; and, luckily for him, he procured a freſh ſupply upon the *four aces*.

By this fortunate ſtroke, his ſpirits were not only conſiderably elevated, but they encouraged him to frequent the ſpot which had proved ſo ſucceſsful to him.

It has been already ſaid, that Jack Wilks was neither ill-natured, nor deſtitute of generoſity. He was, indeed, as willing to part with his money for the aſſiſtance of his fellow-creatures in diſagreeable ſituations, as to purchaſe pleaſure for himſelf with it; ſtill, however, keeping a ſteady eye upon his favourite motto, *J'aime la Liberté.*

In the houſe in which he lodged, a family alſo had an apartment, a gentleman, his lady, and his daughter; people who had, formerly, lived genteely, but having met with innumerable misfortunes, were, at laſt, driven into the upper part of a very ſmall houſe, and found themſelves hardly able to continue even in an ill-furniſhed garret, for which they paid only a trifling ſum.

Mrs.

Mrs. Ferrers had been ſo much out of order ever ſince her coming into the garret her huſband had hired, that all the little money they had was ſoon ſpent, to procure ſome relief for her; but ſpent in vain, as nothing had the deſired effect.

She died, and left her huſband a good deal embarraſſed.

Mrs. Ferrers had refuſed much better offers for *him*. She married him againſt the conſent of her family, but brought him nothing, except a broken heart and a ſhattered conſtitution; as ſhe never could ſtifle the ſelf-reproaches occaſioned by her diſobedience: nor think, without the extremeſt anguiſh, of the diſtreſs in which ſhe involved the man, whom ſhe fondly loved, as he might have married a woman with a fortune, could he have been prevailed

on to give *her* up. With ſuch reproaches and reflections, ſhe never had taſted any happineſs in the marriage ſtate; but ſhe felt the miſery of her mind conſiderably augmented, when ſhe was haſtening to her diſſolution, by being obliged to leave a very fine girl, an only child, about ſixteen, to ſtruggle through the world without friends or fortune; and to leave her to a father who would ſoon become, from his afflictions and neceſſities, ſhe plainly foreſaw, incapable of ſubſiſting on the little which remained, and who muſt himſelf, of courſe, leave their Nancy, their wretched Nancy, expoſed to the wide world, without a ſingle creature to direct her orphan-ſteps: doubly expoſed, by having more beauty and more ſenſibility than the generality of her ſex, which

would

would neceſſarily render her ſituation more dangerous.

Nancy Ferrers had, hitherto, been ſeldom ſeen, or, at leaſt, obſerved, being almoſt always fixed to the ſide of her mother's bed——Mr. Ferrers went, himſelf, to procure what was wanting for his wife. In a ſhort time, however, after *her* death, they both very much attracted Wilks's attention.

One morning, by the orders of the Miſtreſs of the houſe, determined to have her money, if poſſible, out of Mr. Ferrers, who had ſharpened her impatience by procraſtination,——two Bailiffs ſeized him juſt as he was coming out of his room, and hurried him down ſtairs:—his daughter followed them weeping, and begging for mercy.

Wilks,

Wilks, being at the ſame time juſt ready to ſally out of *his* apartment, opened his door, and aſked what was the matter.

One of the fellows who held Mr. Ferrers ſaid, "Nothing at all, Sir, "but a ſmall arreſt, or ſo."

"How much?"

"Ten pounds, or thereabouts, "maſter."

"Ten pounds!" cried Wilks: "H——ns! Is a man to loſe his in-"eſtimable Liberty for ſo paltry a "ſum as ten pounds? Let him go "this inſtant, you raſcal."

"Not I, indeed: I have nothing "to do with the debt, be it ten or "twenty; though I fancy, were "this to be paid, there is ſome o-"thers behind, which will keep "him in our hands.—So come a-"long, Sir"—(to Mr. Ferrers.)

Mr.

Mr. Ferrers made a melancholy bow to Wilks as he paſſed, by way of acknowledgment for his intereſting himſelf in his affairs.

Wilks, immediately ſtopping him, ſaid, "You go no farther, Sir, except you chuſe to accompany "theſe fellows,—*who* has acted in "this ſcandalous manner?"

"I owe Mrs. Bemont ten pounds "for rent, Sir," replied Mr. Ferrers, in a weak, tremulous voice, diſpirited by ſickneſs, poverty, and grief.

"Pray walk into *my* room,—and "do you—(ſpeaking to the bailiff) "call up Mrs. Bemont."

"I will not leave my priſoner," ſaid the bailiff, "for you, or any "man who wears a head, let him "be who he will."

"I'll go, I'll go," cried Miſs Ferrers, in hurrying accents, who, till then, had ſtood behind weeping, and quite unobſerved by Wilks.

She flew down ſtairs directly, and ſoon returned, panting for breath.

"Mrs. Bemont, Sir, is juſt gone "out."

Wilks, ſtruck with her figure, deſired *her* alſo to walk into his apartment, ſurveying her with admiration, from head to foot.

The lovely, trembling girl, though pale as death, and though her eyes were almoſt ſwelled out of her head, was ſo inexpreſſibly alluring, both in her perſon and her manners, to Wilks, that he could not, without much difficulty, turn from ſo pleaſing an object, to ſpeak to the bailiff.

"Well,"

"Well," ſaid he, at laſt, "Leave "this Gentleman with me; *I* will "be anſwerable for him."

"That's an impoſſible thing," replied the fellow, "unleſs you will "down with the duſt."

"Why are you ſo curſed ſtupid "now," ſaid Wilks, "as to ima- "gine, that he will be the better "able to pay the ſum for which you "have arreſted him, by being drag- "ged to a d——d ſpunging-houſe, "where you will ſqueeze him as "dry as a chip. Confinement for "debt is the moſt ridiculous, the "abſurdeſt, of all the oppreſſive "proceedings under which we, "free-born Britons, boaſting of our "Liberty, are every day groaning. "If a man cannot pay when he is "free to turn himſelf about and to "raiſe money, how, in the name of

"Belze-

"Belzebub! is he to ſtop the mouths "of his creditors, when he is not "only hindered from eaſing him-"ſelf of his load, but adding, every "moment, to the weight of it?"

"That does not argify, that's no-"thing to me," ſaid Mr. Grim, "I will have the man or the money; "and you may talk till you are black "in the face, but I'll do my "duty."

Wilks was juſt going to make an anſwer with his foot, in ſo ſpirited a manner, that it might, poſſibly, have ſilenced his adverſary for ſome time,—when Mrs. Bemont burſt into the room.

Mrs. Bemont, having been informed by her ſervant as ſoon as ſhe came home, of the buſtle, and knowing that Wilks was very generous by fits, was in hopes that ſhe ſhould

wheedle

wheedle him out of the money: ſhe knew that by letting Mr. Ferrers go to priſon ſhe ſhould not have any chance for it; and the beauty and diſtreſs of Miſs Ferrers would, ſhe thought, operate ſtrongly in her favour.——She was not miſtaken; Nancy's diſtreſs and beauty added to his innate love of Liberty did the buſineſs ſhe wanted, for he pulled out his purſe and cancelled all her demands.

Mr. Ferrers beheld his benefactor's behaviour with ſilent aſtoniſhment, and his daughter was ready to throw herſelf at his feet.

This unexpected act of generoſity from a ſtranger, almoſt overpowered, indeed, Mr. Ferrers, already depreſſed with grief and indigence, and weakened for want of nouriſhment, having frequently denied himſelf

himſelf food, neceſſary for his own exiſtence, to be enabled to provide indulgences for his wife during her painful illneſs.—He was ſcarce in a condition to expreſs his feelings upon the occaſion, nor indeed to return to his own apartment.

Wilks, ſoftened by the ſufferings of the father, but ſtill more melted by the beauty of the daughter, heightened by her fears, aſſiſted the former with a tenderneſs and aſſiduity truly filial.

When Mr. Ferrers was ſeated in his chamber, he had but juſt ſtrength enough to thank his deliverer for his generous interpoſition, and to tell him that he wiſhed it was in his power to make an acknowledgment, adequate to the very great favour conferred upon him.

Jack

Jack desired him to think no more of what was past; and, taking Miss Ferrers aside, slipped a couple of guineas into her hand, begging her to procure something for her father to comfort him, as he seemed to stand much in need of refreshment.—"I will call and see him "again another time."

The poor girl, overflowing with the same gratitude which oppressed her father, poured out her acknowledgements in the softest, sweetest accents, which he would gladly have staid to hear, had not somebody coming up stairs prevented him.

As soon as he was gone both father and daughter joined in praise of their benefactor. The latter then persuaded the former to take a little rest, as he had been so harrassed and

fatigued

fatigued for a long time; while ſhe went out to procure for him ſomething which he might, ſhe thought, be able to eat for his dinner.

The undertaker having now heard from the bailiff, who had alſo been engaged by him to ſecure Ferrers, after Bemont was ſatisfied, how luckily he had been aſſiſted, imagined that he had a good opportunity to get his money, and therefore ſent him back upon the ſame errand.

The bailiff, finding nobody but the poor man at home juſt beginning to enjoy himſelf, after having been ſo agitated, carried him away, as he was utterly unable to make any reſiſtance.

When his daughter returned home, and heard whither he was gone, ſhe prepared, after a freſh

ſhower

ſhower of tears and repeated lamentations, to follow him: reſolving to adminiſter every comfort to him in *her* power to beſtow.

Wilks, who had been from home all day, did not make his appearance again till after midnight.

As ſoon as he was up in the morning, he deſired the maid of the houſe to go to Mr. Ferrers's garret, and to aſk him if he might call on him to enquire after his health.

The maid told him that Mr. Grim carried him off the day before; but added, that ſhe believed poor Miſs Nancy was come for a few things.

Wilks made no anſwer, but hurrying up ſtairs found the poor girl tying up a ſmall bundle.

Her tears flowed ſo faſt that ſhe could hardly ſee him.

He

He caught her hand, preſſed it in his, begged her to make herſelf quite eaſy.

"I will, inſtantly ſet out with "you to the undertaker's, pay "what he demands, and releaſe "your father: he ſhall never be "confined, while it is in *my* power "to aſſiſt him."

The aſtoniſhed, the tranſported girl broke out into ſuch exclamations of gratitude, that he claſped her to his boſom, and told her, that he deſerved every thing for her filial affection.

She, bluſhing, diſengaged herſelf from his arms, fearful of having ſaid too much; but followed him to the undertaker's, and from thence to the ſpunging-houſe.

Jack, calling a hackney-coach, put the father and daughter into it, brought

brought them back to their lodgings, ordered a dinner, and ſpent the day with them.

Mr. Ferrers, however, though profuſe of grateful expreſſions, was incapable of reliſhing the entertainment provided. The way of life in which he had been for ſome time, the two ſhocks which he had met with ſwiftly ſucceeding each other, and even the ſuddenneſs of the relief which he received, all contributed to overpower him.—He retired to his bed in the evening——never to riſe again.

The afflicted Miſs Ferrers did every thing ſhe poſſibly could, aſſiſted by Wilks's purſe, to ſtop the approach of death—but in vain.—He died in a few days, leaving a fine young creature with a very ſmall ſum, for the defrayment of the ex-

pences attending his funeral, and for her own ſupport.

Wilks had hitherto made himſelf highly ſerviceable, and by appearing like a diſintereſted friend, had acted in the moſt laudable manner. But he now began to exhibit himſelf in another, and a leſs advantageous light.

He made Nancy Ferrers the moſt liberal offers, and ſhe, from the agreeableneſs of his perſon and manners, and from her own too exquiſite ſenſibility, felt emotions in his favour which ſhe had never felt before: and ſhe the more freely indulged thoſe emotions, becauſe ſhe really loved him for his kindneſs to her father, and becauſe her love and her gratitude together ſwallowed up all other conſiderations.

Wilks,

Wilks, however, though he ſoon perceived that he was very agreeable to her, had not yet violated the laws of decency in his behaviour to her. He had all the reaſon in the world to believe that nothing but her modeſty obſtructed the completion of his wiſhes; and though he was of a very amorous complexion he was not deſtitute of delicate ſenſations, well knowing that the more willingly ſhe yielded to his deſires, the more pleaſure he ſhould enjoy from the gratification of them. He, therefore, ſeemed to take no particular notice of her, but waited to ſeize the moment of her being quite unguarded.

While he was thus planning the deſtruction of an innocent girl, ignorant of the ſnare which he was ſpreading for her, and believing

that a man who had, in her opinion, acted ſo nobly towards her, could not poſſibly uſe *her* ill, who had from the firſt taken every method ſhe could think of to acknowledge his generoſity; ſhe was conſidering in what manner to provide for herſelf without laying herſelf under farther obligations to him; and not only talked of going to ſervice, but really intended to make enquiries after a place.

When ſhe aſſured him, in conſequence of her intentions, that all the money ſhe received ſhould be ſet apart for the reduction of the ſum which he had generouſly advanced on her father's account, he replied, taking her in his arms, "You "will give me a thouſand times "more pleaſure, my Nancy, by "being near me, than by throwing "wealth enough to enſlave the

"whole

" whole nation at my feet; and I " inſiſt upon your never giving up " your Liberty, the richeſt jewel " in your poſſeſſion, for me."

In this ſituation they remained ſome time.

One night, Jack ſtaid out rather later than uſual at the tavern, having met a young man of faſhion, with whom he was very intimate when they were at Cambridge together.

He was juſt come to town, but meeting Wilks, they proceeded to the Bedford-arms, and immediately fell into converſation about what had paſt, relating to themſelves, ſince they had ſeen each other.

They talked till it grew late—— Mr. Sidney then, and not till then, recollecting that he had not ſecured a lodging, told Wilks, in whom he ſaw no propenſity to quit his chair,

that he was fatigued with his journey, but had forgotten to hire a room to ſleep in while he ſtaid in London.—"Where are *your* quarters "Jack?"

Jack, directly naming the ſtreet and Mrs. Bemont, told him that he might occupy *his* apartment for the evening, if he pleaſed.—"I have a "ſtrong notion that I ſhan't come "home all night."

Sidney, actually tired, took him at his word, and repaired to Mrs. Bemont's.

The maid having fallen aſleep, Miſs Ferrers, who had heard ſomebody knock twice or thrice, while ſhe was preparing to go to reſt in her garret, went down, imagining that ſhe ſhould find Mr. Wilks at the door, who often, ſhe knew, kept late hours.

Half

Half undreſſed, but wrapping her gown about her, ſhe went downſtairs with a candle in her hand, to let him in.

To the ſingular interpoſition of Providence in her favour was poor thoughtleſs Nancy's preſervation certainly to be attributed.——Had Wilks been the perſon whom ſhe let in, 'tis highly probable that ſhe would have fallen a ſacrifice to the grateful ſenſations of her heart: ſtranger as ſhe was to all the artifices of a deceitful world, and ready to ſuppoſe every body as undeſigning as herſelf.

The moment ſhe opened the door and ſaw a perſon whom ſhe had never ſeen before, ſhe bluſhed, and could hardly keep the candle in her hand.

Sidney, ſtruck with her beauty and the diſorder of her dreſs, in a houſe, the reputation of which was, in his opinion, not a little doubtful, as his friend Wilks, with whoſe principles he was well acquainted, lodged in it, began, at firſt, to think he was in luck, and that Jack had not only provided a bed but a charming companion for him. The modeſt glow, however, in her cheeks, and the amiable confuſion in which ſhe appeared on being ſeen to ſo much diſadvantage, made him think more favourably of her. Her dreſs too, though diſordered, diſtinguiſhed her from a common ſervant; there was nothing tawdry, nothing ſuſpicious in it; and her looks and carriage equally declared her to be a gentlewoman.

He,

He, therefore,—ſetting aſide his ardently gazing at her—treated her with the reſpect which he thought due to her.

"Mr. Wilks, Madam, not ſleep-
"ing at home to night, I am, by
"his permiſſion, come to take
"poſſeſſion of his apartment; be
"ſo kind then as to call the maid
"to ſhew me the room."

Miſs Ferrers, at the concluſion of this ſpeech, bluſhingly retired.

When Betty attended him up-ſtairs, he, by the help of half a crown (which he would have with more pleaſure beſtowed upon Nancy) got out of her all that ſhe knew relating to Miſs Ferrers and Mr. Wilks; and Betty concluded her intelligence with ſtrong hints that the former was no better than ſhe ſhould be.

Sidney, who knew the common cant of all wenches in ſuch houſes, did not believe all that had been told him.

When Wilks came home, next morning, he related to him all that he had ſeen and heard.

Jack, curſing his own confounded careleſſneſs, ſaid, "What a de-"licious night I have loſt! for, I "ſuppoſe, you took poſſeſſion of "my girl as well as my bed."

"No, upon honour," replied Sidney, "ſhe looked ſo innocent and "modeſt, that I was, contrary to "my intentions, when ſhe firſt "opened the door, compelled, with "ſo much awe did ſhe ſtrike me, to "treat her with reſpect."

"She deſerves it," ſaid Jack; "ſhe is a veſtal, if there really ever "was ſuch a human being exiſting.

"Yet,

"Yet, I believe, the little rogue's "heart goes pit-a-pat for me: "and you know, Harry, when a "girl's heart is once in your power, "her perſon will not be long out "of it."

"Why ſhe looked, indeed, a lit-"tle diſappointed, when ſhe found "a ſtranger at the door laſt night. "——But how can you be ſuch a "devil, Jack, as to ſeduce ſo ſweet, "ſo innocent a creature, who, if "ſhe yields, will yield merely from "a deſire to give a ſtrong proof of "her gratitude, for favours received "from you! Do you act agreeably "to your principles, thus to delude "a poor girl out of all that is valu-"able to her, by ungenerous arts, "and falſe reaſoning?"

"I proceed quite in another ſort "of a manner," ſaid Jack.— "I uſe

" no art: I do not reaſon.—I only
" perſuade.—I hate force."—

" Are you not, therefore, the
" more criminal? By making any
" attempts towards violence, you
" would give her a fair opportunity
" to be upon her guard; but while
" you lull ſuſpicion aſleep, ſhe has
" no chance to eſcape from you,
" without the loſs of her virtue.—
" Even the goodneſs of her own
" tender heart, will betray her:
" fye, fye Wilks! it is mean, it is
" unmanly, to oppoſe *your* ſtrength
" and knowledge to *her* weakneſs
" and ignorance.——She has not
" deſerved ſuch treatment from you.
" ——Inſtead of forming any de-
" ſigns to ruin her, you ought to be-
" hold her with reverence.——
" Think on the conflict in her gen-
" tle boſom between gratitude, vir-

"tue, and, moſt probably, love,
"and behave to her like a man of
"honour.——How many worthy
"fellows now, would be bleſt with
"ſuch a partner for life, and make
"this pretty creature, as well as
"themſelves, compleatly happy?"

"What the devil! would you
"ruin the girl at once, by marry-
"ing her?——By depriving her of
"her Liberty, you render her mi-
"ſerable for ever."

"Come, come, Jack, you carry
"this furor for Liberty too far;
"beyond all reaſon. Liberty is no
"longer valuable, no longer to be
"eſteemed, when it ceaſes to con-
"tribute to our honour or our peace;
"and how either the one or the o-
"ther can be procured by the de-
"ſtruction of innocence, and the vi-
"olation of chaſtity, I cannot, poſ-
"ſibly,

"ſibly, divine.—But to ſettle mat-
"ters upon an amicable footing,
"give *me* the girl,——and——"

"Let me periſh if I do," ſaid Jack, "before I have done with "her."

"It is very well, Mr. Wilks," replied Sidney, taking up his hat in a hurry, and going out of the room: ——"Your humble ſervant;——I "leave you to your own medita-"tions."

He then went into the parlour, and, tipping Mrs. Betſy with another half-crown, deſired her to ſtep to Miſs Ferrers, and to let her know, that he begged the favour of ſpeaking a few words to her.

The poor girl, alarmed at a meſſage of which ſhe could not comprehend the meaning, came down.

Sidney,

Sidney, ſhutting the door, addreſſed her in the following terms:—

"You are in the greateſt danger, "Madam.—You may believe me; "—you may truſt me:——I am "ſincerely your friend.——Avoid "Mr. Wilks, as you would avoid "the worſt of men.——I can ſtay "no longer now; but, if you will "place a confidence in me, I will "ſave you from the villainous de- "ſigns againſt your virtue.——Be "in the way at five o'clock;——I "will call on you,—only with a de- "ſire to be truly ſerviceable to you: "for your looks aſſure me, that you "are deſerving of my care."——

Nancy, alarmed and terrified, dropped a bluſhing curtſy at his departure, and returned to her own room full of aſtoniſhment.

Sidney,

Sidney, having heard that Miſs Ferrers's diſtreſs aroſe, in a great meaſure, from her mother's having married againſt the inclination of her parents; and that Mr. Byam, her mother's father, was living, and in affluent circumſtances, in a pleaſant village near London, went to him immediately.

Sidney, though perſonally a ſtranger to Mr. Byam, not being unknown to him by name, was ſoon admitted.

He began, in a few moments, to acquaint him with his grand-daughter's melancholy ſituation, and urged the certainty of her being totally ruined for want of *his* protection, as her beauty, ſenſibility, and poverty, all conſpired to her deſtruction.

He told his ſtory in a manner the moſt likely to affect the hearer of it, con-

concealing, however, the name of Wilks; but (as old people, who have outlived their tender paſſions, rarely make proper allowances for the youthful part of the human ſpecies, under the influence of thoſe paſſions) he found him, at firſt, very loth to have any thing to ſay to her.

—— "Her mother was diſobedient, "and *ſhe* will be, I ſuppoſe, juſt "ſuch another perverſe little huſ-"ſey."

"Well, Sir," ſaid Sidney, "and "if ſhe *ſhould* marry without your "leave; even the worſt marriage, "is better than a life in which ſhe "muſt lie at the mercy of every "looſe fellow who takes a fancy to "her."

"And pray, Sir," replied the old Gentleman, ſurveying him from head to foot, "how came *you* to

"have

"have ſo much more virtue than
"your companions? You are young,
"and not ill-made; how came *you*,
"Sir, to be ſo different from the
"generality of your ſex, of the ſame
"age, and with the ſame perſonal
"advantages?"

"I do not pretend to any extra-
"ordinary virtue, Sir.——Had I
"truſted myſelf much longer with
"Miſs Ferrers, my paſſions might
"have carried me to unwarrantable
"lengths.——Take her, therefore,
"while ſhe is unſullied; for I will
"not anſwer for the continuance of
"my ſelf-denial in her company."

"You talk well;—but how ſhall
"I be ſure that this is *my* girl?
"May you not bring me one who
"has already been upon the town?
"May you not put off one of your
"bat-

"battered-miſtreſſes upon me, for "my grand-daughter?"

"Why, Sir," ſaid Sidney, "if "the youth, innocence, and mo- "deſty of this beautiful creature, "will not convince you, that I have "not impoſed upon you, it is poſ- "ſible, that ſhe may have ſome toy "remaining, once in the poſſeſſion "of her mother, by which the iden- "tity of her perſon may be aſcer- "tained. But if, after all, you "will not receive her, I muſt e'en "take her home myſelf; and then, "as I told you before, I ſhall not "be able, perhaps, to act the phi- "loſopher."

"Well," replied Byam, pleaſed with his frankneſs, "let me ſee her; "bring her hither, as upon a viſit, "and I may, poſſibly, do ſomething "for her."

While

While Sidney was thus employed in Miſs Ferrers's ſervice, *ſhe* was far from being eaſy at home.

For two whole hours did ſhe ſit, reflecting on what had paſſed; and began to ſee plainly, that her ſituation was both dangerous and uncertain. She both loved and dreaded Wilks: ſhe thought him a man *to be* dreaded, though ſhe had not been ſo much cautioned by her worthy parents againſt familiarities with the oppoſite ſex, ſo much fortified with prudential precepts, as ſhe ſhould have been; and as many girls, under the direction of leſs worthy parents, actually are. The truth is, Mr. and Mrs. Ferrers were, by ill health, poverty, and increaſing diſtreſſes, from the time that their daughter was eight years old, almoſt rendered incapable of thinking of any thing but their

their daily ſubſiſtence. Miſs Ferrers's education was not, indeed, totally neglected; but her parents were, themſelves, her only inſtructors. They taught her to read, to write, and to draw. In writing and drawing, however, ſhe had made a ſmall progreſs.

Virtuous, therefore, from the natural goodneſs of her heart, and bashful from the privacy of her life, Wilks, by his behaviour and his perſonal attractions, appeared to her in a very agreeable and amiable light.—Dazzled with his generoſity to her father, when his affairs were ſo greatly embarraſſed, ſhe ſaw no faults in him. The bright ſide of his character only was exhibited; and with that ſhe was ſoon charmed.——His humanity and his liberality made the firſt impreſſions; his lively, chear-

ful

ful addreſs, his little complements to her, and his tender glances which were ſometimes accompanied with a gentle preſſure of the hand, and a ſtolen kiſs, raiſed ſenſations in her young heart which ſhe had never felt before—ſenſations as pleaſing as they were new.—Yet was ſhe not, during ſo ſharp a trial of her ſenſibility, free from ſhame or fear. She bluſhed at her own weakneſs, and ſhe was afraid of going too far; though ſhe ſcarce knew whether ſhe deſerved cenſure for being prepoſſeſſed in favour of a man who had been ſo very kind to her father, and who was ſtill ſo obliging to *her*.—Love would not let her be *indifferent* to him, and gratitude ratified the deciſions of love.

While ſhe was actuated by ſuch ſentiments, and while ſhe was un-

der

der the power of ſuch feelings, the abrupt and ſolemn caution of Sidney, a perfect ſtranger to her, againſt the man whom he called *his* friend, and whom ſhe, at that moment, believed to be *hers*, alarmed her conſiderably; alarmed her ſo much that ſhe was at a loſs to know what to think of the information which ſhe received, or how to act in conſequence of it.

When Wilks, who had a mind to hear in his turn, what really had paſſed between Sidney and Miſs Ferrers, came into her room in order to have his curioſity compleatly gratified, he found her ſitting involved in thought.

Catching her in his arms, before ſhe was aware of his approach, he cried, "What's the matter, my dear

" dear girl? What are you thinking
" about?"

Theſe words were accompanied with two or three eager kiſſes, the warmth of which, added to the efforts he made to detain her, increaſed the apprehenſions which Sidney had rouſed in her; and ſhe begged him to let her go, with a ſerious earneſtneſs which he had never obſerved in her before.

" What? coying it, my pretty
" Nancy," ſaid he, ſtill holding her;
" Come, come, you are not uſually
" ſo ſhy.—What has Sidney done to
" you, to make ſuch a change in
" you?"

" I don't know who you mean,
" Sir," replied ſhe, ſtriving to diſengage herſelf from him, and bluſhing, both from tenderneſs, fear, and a conſciouſneſs of not acting with

with her accuſtomed openneſs, upon the occaſion.

"What, has he learnt you to tell "fibs already, child? Come, ſit "down," continued he, pulling her on his lap.—"I mean that "handſome young fellow who came "to aſk for *my* bed laſt night. "Wasn't he handſome, Nancy? "Come, kiſs and tell me all."

"Pray let me go Sir, ſaid ſhe," ſtill more confuſed; "I have nothing "to tell you; indeed I ſcarce ſaw the "gentleman."

"That's much——How did you "diſpoſe of your eyes then, for *he* "ſaw *you*."

"Indeed," ſaid ſhe, breaking from him, with an emotion which ſhe could not conceal, "I was not "a minute at the door: Betty was "aſleep, or I had not opened it:

" he called her the moment he was
" in the paſſage, and I went up
" ſtairs directly."

" And ſo he didn't kiſs you?"

" No, I can aſſure you, Sir."

" And you ſaw him no more *that*
" night?"

" No, upon my word, Sir."

" There's my good girl—I know
" I can believe my Nancy."

" Why, did he ſay any harm of
" me, Sir?"

" No, child; but I had a fancy to
" know how you liked him, that's all."

Without waiting for her anſwer he then began to take more liberties than he had ever attempted; but with greater delicacy than he had ever diſcovered to any other female.—His behaviour made no ſmall impreſſion upon a heart already prejudiced in his favour; and there is no ſaying

how far her virtue might have been diſabled from oppoſing her inclination, had not Sidney's precautions been immediately recollected; in a critical moment recollected to ſave her from ruin.

Burſting from him with a ſpirited motion, and throwing herſelf into a chair at the farther end of the room, ſhe intreated him to leave her to herſelf.

"I am not well——I am very "much indiſpoſed."

"That is, you are not in humour "with me this morning, I ſee "plainly.—But if you are ſick, my "Nancy,"—(approaching her with ſtill more tenderneſs) "I am truly "concerned;——poſſibly you may "want immediate relief.—There" —(giving her guinea) "go and get "ſomething to make you better.—

" I will call and ſee you again by " and by."

Wilks had now taken her by her weak ſide. Not that her love was in the leaſt of the lucrative kind.— She had no paſſion for money; ſhe wanted it not, like the generality of her ſex, to purchaſe fine cloaths and to procure ſplendid trifles; ſhe wiſhed for it only that ſhe might procure the decent neceſſaries of life. Having endured ſo much unhappineſs herſelf, and having ſeen her friends ſuffer ſo ſeverely from the preſſures of poverty, ſhe was ſtruck in a particular manner by the new proofs of Wilks's generoſity and affection: they ſtaggered her; they weakened her doubts and ſuſpicions concerning him. Yet ſtill Sidney's behaviour was not forgotten.——— She remembered it; but her ideas were

were in ſuch confuſion, and her heart was ſo violently agitated by conflicting emotions, that ſhe could form no reſolution with regard to her conduct, in a ſituation which admitted of no delay.

While ſhe ſat, uncertain how to act, Wilks called her a pretty little dear delicate toad; and, again kiſſing her with ardor, toſſed another guinea into her lap, and ran down ſtairs, bidding her to be ſure to expect him in the evening.

Nancy, ſcarce knowing whether ſhe was glad or ſorry at his departure, endeavoured again to collect her ſcattered thoughts together; but to collect them was not in her power; her mind was in a chaotic ſtate, and all her efforts to think clearly were ineffectual.

When Betty, therefore, came up and told her that the gentleman who ſlept there laſt night, was in the parlour, and begged to ſpeak with her, ſhe ſtarted, ſtared, and ſeemed to be in the greateſt embarraſſment, as he arrived full three hours before the time appointed by him.

"The gentleman waits, Miſs."

Determined by theſe few words, ſhe roſe up, and bade the maid tell him that ſhe was coming.

Putting her dreſs a little in order, ſhe, with trembling ſteps, followed the girl down ſtairs.

Sidney advanced to meet her with a reſpectful air, and, offering his hand to lead her to a chair, told her that he hoped he had been fortunate enough to find a parent ready to receive

ceive her in the perſon of her grand-father.

"Oh! dear, cried Nancy," turning pale, "my grandfather was "always very angry with my poor "father and mother, and I ſhall be "afraid to ſee him."

"Don't be alarmed, Miſs Ferrers, "replied he," with a manly tenderneſs, mixed with an affecting concern, occaſioned by her apprehenſions, "you ſhall be ſecure from "the leaſt ill treatment——compoſe yourſelf——This ſuppriſe is "too much for you;—let me call "for ſomething for you to take, "that you may be the better en-"abled to ſupport ſuch unexpected "intelligence."

"I can't take any thing, anſwered ſhe," recovering herſelf a little, "neither can I go with you,——I

" don't know you, Sir: you will not
" therefore, I hope, think the worſe
" of me for my unwillingneſs to ac-
" company a ſtranger."

" I cannot think amiſs of you,
" ſaid he,—I even eſteem you for
" your amiable terrors; but believe
" me, Miſs Ferrers, when I ſwear
" to you by all that's ſacred, that
" I never will give you the ſlighteſt
" reaſon to repent of the confidence
" you ſhall place in me; it is to
" *ſerve you alone* that I have endea-
" voured to find out your grandfa-
" ther, who will, I dare aſſure my-
" ſelf, be as happy in meeting with
" ſuch a child, as you will be in re-
" ceiving the kindneſs of a relation,
" whoſe care and affection you ſo
" much want at preſent.—Don't be
" anxious about any thing: *I* will
" not put you into the hands of

any

" any perſon, with whom you will
" not enjoy both ſafety and happi-
" neſs.—And why ſhould you fear
" a man, whom you have never
" ſeen? A man whom you will
" probably find very agreeable,
" when he becomes acquainted with
" you?"

She ſighed, ſhe looked down; ſhe did not know what to ſay.—— She was afraid to go: yet, ſhe knew not whether ſhe ought to refuſe.—

At laſt, ſhe raiſed up her weeping eyes to Heaven, and claſping her hands together, ſaid, " Merciful
" God! direct me; for I have no
" other friend."——

" You want no other, my dear
" Miſs Ferrers.——Your innocence
" and virtue will ever moſt power-
" fully recommend you to the pro-
" tection of Providence; and while

" you are virtuous, while you are
" innocent, you will certainly find
" thoſe your friends, who are the
" moſt likely to ſerve you. Let me,
" therefore, perſuade you to accom-
" pany me to your grand-father,
" whoſe name you know, at leaſt,
" as well as the place of his reſi-
" dence."

" His name is Byam," ſaid ſhe,
" and he lives at Kew."

" To Kew I am to conduct you;
" but as there is no time to be loſt,
" pack up your things, that we may
" ſet out.——Have you nothing in
" your poſſeſſion which belonged to
" your mother; and which may, by
" ſtrengthening the evidence ariſing
" from your age and perſon, leave
" Mr. Byam not the leaſt room to
" queſtion your being the daughter
" of his child?"

" No,

"No, Sir," replied ſhe: "my "parents were ſo diſtreſſed, that "they long ago were obliged to diſ- "poſe of every thing.—Yet,—on "recollection, I have, I believe, a "trifle of my mother's, which ſhe "was determined not to part with, "as it would fetch but little."

"That's lucky.——Well then, "ſtep up, and make what prepara- "tions you pleaſe.——My ſervant, "in the mean time, ſhall call a "coach."

At the word coach, ſhe ſtopped,—ſhe heſitated,——ſhe trembled.——"Muſt I go," ſaid ſhe, "without "acquainting my friend, my bene- "factor, the man who was ſo hu- "mane, ſo generous, to my poor "loſt parents? Muſt I go, without "acquainting him with my depar-

" ture from him,——perhaps, for
" ever?"

Sidney was now, in his turn, diſconcerted. He was exceedingly concerned to ſee her ſo much attached to Wilks; but, not chuſing to diſcover his feelings at that juncture, he only replied, " There is an abſo-
" lute neceſſity for it.——You will,
" in a ſhort time, be convinced of
" the truth of this aſſertion."

Theſe words, gravely and earneſtly uttered, were followed with repeated requeſts to make her preparations with ſpeed.

She ſoon came down with her little bundle, and was conveyed by him to the coach which waited.

He ſeated himſelf by her ſide, and his ſervant, having ordered the coachman to drive to Kew, got up behind.

During

During their ride thither, Sidney, who ſaw her terror and anxiety with the ſincereſt compaſſion, endeavoured to calm the tempeſt in her mind, by the moſt ſoothing and encouraging converſation.

When ſhe perceived that he treated her with the greateſt deference, ſhe became ſomewhat more aſſured: ſtill, however, ſhe was overwhelmed with a melancholy, which all his efforts to raiſe her ſpirits could not remove.——Her eyes were red with weeping, and frequent ſighs ſhook her tender boſom.

They arrived, at length, at Mr. Byam's.

Sidney, having firſt begged her to endeavour to be as chearful as poſſible, left her, for a moment, in the parlour, while he went to inform the old Gentleman that ſhe was come,

and

and to ſoften him as much as he could in her favour, being much afraid that his bluntneſs might make a conſiderable addition to her terrifying apprehenſions.

His precaution was kind, but it did not anſwer the end which he propoſed by it.

"Well, well," cried Byam, "bring her in: let's ſee if ſhe has "any reſemblance of her mother."

"Good Sir," ſaid Sidney, "conſider her a little; do not ſpeak ſo "harſhly to the poor creature."

"Well, well," replied he, with a half ſmile, "why don't you bring "her to me?"

Sidney then went to her.

Seeing her ſtand weeping and trembling, he took her handkerchief, wiped her eyes, deſired her to have cou-

courage, and led her to her grandfather.

Byam, the moment he caſt his eyes on her, turned away his face, and cried, "My own girl! my poor, "poor Nancy!"

Tranſported with theſe wiſhed-for expreſſions, and willing to increaſe the old Gentleman's affectionate emotions, Sidney ſaid, "Now, "Miſs Ferrers, you can no longer "be alarmed, you can no longer be "afraid of not meeting with the "kindeſt reception from your only "remaining near relation, whoſe "bleſſing and protection you ought "to ſolicit with the moſt fervent "tenderneſs, and moſt unfeigned "duty."

Thus prompted by Sidney, Nancy threw herſelf on her knees before the old man, whoſe behaviour, added to the

the many melancholy ideas which ruſhed into her mind, on remembering the diſtreſſes of her father and mother, forced from her a freſh ſhower of tears.

Mr. Byam, not leſs touched alſo by recollection, and ſmarting with remorſe for having ſo cruelly neglected her mother, held out his hand to her.

"Get up, my dear, and do not "cry; I will be kind to you."

Sidney then raiſed her from the ground, and put her into her grandfather's arms, who, after having affectionately embraced her, ſaid to *him*, "I joy, Sir, to receive this poor "child from your hands; and look "upon you, for this one action, to "be the moſt virtuous of men.—— "Be aſſured, you will loſe nothing "by

" by your noble behaviour upon this
" occaſion."

" I hope not," replied he, with vivacity, in order to give a more chearful turn to the converſation; " if I have been of any ſervice to " you, or to Miſs Ferrers, I am " amply recompenſed."

" You are the beſt young fellow " I ever knew," ſaid Mr. Byam.— " Virtue is, as you ſay, it's own re- " ward; but you will not be ſorry, " I ſuppoſe, to receive ſome other " for all that:—and you may de- " pend upon it, that I ſhall be al- " ways glad to ſee you, or to be ſer- " viceable to you."

Sidney, believing that both Mr. Byam and his grand-daughter might chuſe to be left to talk over their family, bade them adieu, telling the young lady, that as Mr. Byam had given

given him leave, he would ſee her again very ſoon.

A modeſt bow, with a ſtrong expreſſion of gratitude in her countenance, was all her reply, on his quitting the room.

She then, at Mr. Byam's deſire, related all that had happened to her father and mother, within her memory, and, at the cloſe of her narrative, produced a ſmall locket of gold faſtened to a ribbon, by way of bracelet, which Mr. Byam remembered to have bought for her mother, when a girl, and on which were engraved the initials of her name in a cypher.

This trinket, and the ſtriking reſemblance ſhe bore to her mother, confirmed the identity of her perſon; and ſhe was treated by her grandfather with the ſincereſt affection.

By

By her grand-father's tender treatment, Nancy's mind was ſoon reſtored to peace; but ſhe could not, however, by any means, forget Wilks, whoſe generoſity to her parents ſhe could not help mentioning in the higheſt terms.

As to Jack, when returned home in the evening, according to his promiſe, and heard that ſhe was gone, he beſtowed two or three hearty curſes upon Sidney for ſpoiling ſport, vowed never to lend his bed to any body again, and, before morning, forgot all about her.

Sidney, being well acquainted with his friend's humour, kept out of his way for a few days, knowing that time would obliterate all reſentment againſt him, eſpecially as he could prove, that he had taken her away with no other deſign, than to reſtore her

her to her family.——He was only afraid, that Wilks would not be ſo ſoon forgotten by *her*; and his fears were not idle ones. He thought, indeed, that ſhe was very ſtrongly prejudiced in his favour; and he was not miſtaken.—When an agreeable young fellow has made an impreſſion upon the heart of an innocent girl, all gentleneſs and ſenſibility, that impreſſion is hardly ever effaced; the leſs likely to be ſo, if grateful ſenſations for particular favours received from him in diſtreſſful circumſtances, are mingled with her affectionate feelings.

Sidney, however, ſetting aſide his inclination for Miſs Ferrers, believed it ſo incumbent on him to give her a juſt idea of Wilks's character, as her peace might be promoted, and her reputation preſerved

by

by it, that he reſolved to paint him in his true colours to her, without troubling himſelf about conſequences.

Imagining, therefore, that by endeavouring to make himſelf agreeable to her, and to induce her to repoſe a confidence in him, he ſhould the more eaſily accompliſh his friendly deſign, he very ſoon availed himſelf of Mr. Byam's invitation to his houſe; and, being prodigiouſly in favour with the old Gentleman, ſtrove, by every attention in his power, to pleaſe his grand-daughter.

To drive Wilks out of her head, was his firſt concern; and, in order to prevent her from dwelling on paſt ſcenes with him, he tried to turn her thoughts upon quite new ſubjects.

By

By frequently converſing with her, he found that ſhe had a very good natural underſtanding, which might be much improved by reading; eſpecially, as reading was her favourite amuſement. He, therefore, recommended to her peruſal ſuch books as were beſt calculated to enlarge her mind, as well as to entertain it.

At her grand-father's requeſt, who ſeemed greatly pleaſed with the notice he took of her, he preſented ſeveral capital performances to her.

By reading to her, and by hearing her read, he diſcovered that ſhe had a fine taſte, and a good ear. Her voice was particularly muſical and ſweet, and he preſſed her to learn to play upon the *mandoline*, being of opinion, that the lulling tones of *that* inſtrument, accompanying her voice, would ſhew it to advantage.

—The

—The *mandoline* ſuited the tenderneſs of her diſpoſitions. She performed upon it, and ſung in a delicate ſtyle.

Yet, notwithſtanding all the pains he took to pleaſe her, ſhe diſcovered not the ſlighteſt degree of ſatisfaction. Often, indeed, did ſhe declare her gratitude to him in very forcible terms; but nothing more: nor did *he* ſhew more than a deſire to entertain and improve her; being too prudent to think of marrying a girl whoſe heart was, certainly, not diſengaged. Her youth, beauty, ſimplicity, and modeſty had, from the firſt, made an impreſſion upon him. Being attached to no particular object, that impreſſion was deeper and deeper, every hour he converſed with her; and he flattered himſelf, that as ſhe was very young,

and

and very little acquainted with the world, he might, by his unwearied aſſiduities, inſpire her breaſt with the ſame paſſion which ſhe had kindled in *his*.

Animated with hope, he doubled his endeavours to gain her love, but had the mortification to find, that with all thoſe endeavours, he could only obtain her eſteem. Her eſteem, indeed, it was impoſſible to refuſe him; as he had ſnatched her from penury and diſhonour, and placed her in a ſtate of affluence and ſecurity.

Wilks, it has been already ſaid, in a ſhort time thought no more about his Nancy. He ſpent his hours much in the uſual manner; his old friends, the dice, ſupplying him with caſh.

One

One night, fortune not having favoured him agreeably to his wiſhes, he repaired, with ſome gentlemen, to the Shakeſpeare's-head, in hopes of burying the remembrance of his ill luck in a bumper.

When they had ſat ſome time, one of the company deſired to introduce a friend of his from the city.

As no objection was made to that requeſt, he went out, and returned with a young fellow, who had been placed in a merchant's houſe of eſtabliſhed reputation, that he might be introduced into the commercial world in the moſt advantageous light. His father, a country Gentleman, of whom he was the ſecond ſon, having advanced a conſiderable ſum for that purpoſe, and deſigning to ſet him up, when he was

out of his time, with a large capital.

Young Shadow,——that was his name,——was a lean, lank, meagre, ill-made object, with a white unmeaning face; his ſhoulders were flat and high, his light-grey eyes were dull, and projecting from a forehead rough with wrinkles, from a trick he had got of ſhoving up his eyebrows upon every occaſion: that habitual elevation of his brows, however, threw ſome ſort of expreſſion into his countenance, which otherwiſe would have appeared as vacant as the viſage of a calf. His hair, which was of a pale-yellow, and naturally lank, being, by the aſſiſtance of a hair-dreſſer, and a quantity of flax mounted in the modern taſte, inſtead of giving him a becoming air, made him look rather like a

daſtardly

daſtardly creature, under the terrors of a panic.

Such was the outſide of Mr. Shadow; his internals may be eaſily gueſſed, by the following account of his accompliſhments:——He had a ſtrong propenſity to *ſpout*, to mimick, to be a buck, blood, choice ſpirit, and d—d high fellow; but he had neither talents nor a conſtitution to enable him to make any figure, whenever he attempted to ſhine in thoſe reſpectable characters.

In leſs than half an hour after his introduction into Mr. Wilks's company, he not only became his profeſſed admirer, but nobly reſolved to ſay as *he* ſaid, and to do as *he* did.

The reſt of the company, who ſuffered him to make one among them, in order to play him off for their own diverſion, ſeeing ſo laud-

able an ambition in him, encouraged him by all means to copy closely so excellent an original.

Their first plot was levelled at his head: they accordingly plied him briskly with bumpers, that they might see what metal he was made of; and when he, between two and three in the morning, began to grow horribly sick, they proposed to sally into the street for a frolick, in other words, to break lamps, knock down decrepid watchmen, and make windows rattle about their ears.

Fortune, however, had destined other kind of sport for them that morning.

While they were scouring along like a pack of devils just broke loose from *Pandemonium*, headed by Wilks, dragging Shadow after him, who hung back a little, through squeamish-

ſqueamiſhneſs and fear, they came up with a Gentleman and Lady, going home from a houſe in the neighbourhood in which they had ſpent the evening, preceded by a ſervant in livery with a lanthorn.

Wilks coming behind the Lady, ſeized her round the neck rudely, and kiſſed her; then, taking her by the hand, endeavoured to pull her after him.

The Gentleman turning about, ſtruck him, and aſked him what he meant by meddling with *his* wife?

"What the devil is it to *me*," ſaid Wilks, returning the blow, "whoſe "wife ſhe is; ſhe is a fine woman, "and, as a fine woman, I have a "mind to be at her."

"Villain," cried the Gentleman, drawing, "you ſhall have my life "firſt."

Hey-day!" replied Jack, "what-
" a-p—x do you mean by that?—
" Muſt you run me through the
" body, only for kiſſing your wife?
" She was made to be kiſſed by me,
" and by every body who chuſes to
" kiſs her."

" Draw, raſcal! I ſay," cried the Gentleman, while the Lady, with tears and ſhrieks, endeavoured to ſtop him! "Draw! for I would not " murder you, though you deſerve " no quarter, for having taken ſo " inſolent a liberty."

BRITISH MUSEUM

The END of the FIRST VOLUME.